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DH

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P16

- Central bank will share 70% of compensation
- Bank, customer will each bear 15% of lost amount
- Central bank will use Rs 85,000-cr Depositor Education and Awareness Fund
- 2/3 of digital frauds under Rs 50,000 in amount
- RBI plans lagged credit to beneficiary accounts

RBI to pay fraud victims up to Rs 25k

Once-in-lifetime benefit for people who lose money in small-value transactions

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) will provide up to Rs 25,000 as compensation to bank customers who become victims of small-value financial frauds, Governor Sanjay Malhotra said on Friday.

In his statement after the 59th meeting of the Monetary Policy Committee, Malhotra said the central bank will come out with a framework for compensation in case of small-value fraudulent transactions.

He said the RBI would pay 70% or up to Rs 25,000 lost in fraudulent transactions without any questions being asked to the customer for the first time instances. The rest of the 30% of the loss will be equally shared by the customer (15%) and the concerned bank.

This will be a once-in-lifetime benefit for the victims of fraud, including those who shared OTPs. The money will be paid from the Rs 85,000-crore Depositor Education and Awareness Fund.

Alongside curbing digital frauds, Malhotra also announced tightening of norms to curb mis-selling of financial products by regulated entities. “For customer protection, we will issue three draft guidelines: one, relating to mis-selling; two, regarding recovery of loans and engagement of recovery agents; and three, on limiting liability of customers in unauthorised electronic banking transactions.”

► **RBI, Page 4**
More reports, Page 12



RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra. REUTERS

RBI keeps policy rates unchanged

Interest rates on home, auto and other loans are unlikely to change in the near future as the RBI has decided to maintain status quo on policy rates and indicated a longer pause, saying trade deals with the US and the EU would support growth even as inflation is likely to stay low.

Details on Page 12

regulated entities. “For customer protection, we will issue three draft guidelines: one, relating to mis-selling; two, regarding recovery of loans and engagement of recovery agents; and three, on limiting liability of customers in unauthorised electronic banking transactions.”

► **RBI, Page 4**
More reports, Page 12

In 1st major op, cyber command raids mule account networks

PRAJWAL D'SOUZA
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka Cyber Command has launched a major operation to dismantle mule account networks in the state and target organised cybercriminal rings.

Investigators have identified 42,000 mule accounts used to launder the proceeds of cybercrimes and arrested 13 suspects, so far, following raids in 29 districts.

The arrested are Dharmapal, Suhail Pasha, Aqueel Pasha, Mohammed Muzammil, Patel Jitendra Kumar, Mohan Kumar, Juned Pasha, Majeed Madini, Shaheed Alam Khan, Chandrashekar, Ramkiran and Sharathkumar.

As many as 17 FIRs were registered and 25 ATM cards, 13 cheque books, 12 mobile phones and other items were seized. The raids were held between February 5 and 6 by officers of the respective Cybercrime Police Stations spread across the state.

Mule accounts are bank accounts used as mules to launder money gained by cybercriminals by cheating people.

► **Cyber crime, Page 4**

31 killed, 169 hurt in suicide bombing at Pakistan mosque

Suspected Pak Taliban terrorist detonates himself at the gate of Shia shrine

ISLAMABAD, PTI

A suicide bomber blew himself up at a Shia mosque during Friday prayers in Pakistan's capital, killing at least 31 people and injuring 169 others, said officials, in one of the worst terror attacks targeting the community in recent years.

The powerful explosion, which was heard from a far distance, took place at Khadijatul Kubra mosque-cum-imambargah in the Tarlai area of Islamabad, the police said in a statement.

The suicide bomber was stopped at the gate of the imambargah, but he detonated himself, police and eyewitnesses said.

At least 31 people were killed and 169 others injured in the explosion, a district administration spokesperson said.



A man reacts while being comforted, after the explosion, in Islamabad. REUTERS

No group immediately claimed responsibility for the blast. However, police sources said the attacker was a foreign national and had links with Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan.

Eyewitnesses said the terrorist first opened fire and then detonated himself. The attack came less than three months after a suicide bomber killed 12 people outside a court in Islamabad. Friday's incident happened when Uzbek President Shavkat Mirziyoyev was visiting Pakistan.

President Asif Ali Zardari, Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif and Senate Opposition Leader Allama Raja Nasir Abbas condemned the attack.

Yathindra says CM to stay; DKS: Yathindra our high command

MYSURU/MANGALURU, DHNS: The power tussle in the state's Congress continued on Friday, with MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah saying his father Siddaramaiah would continue as the chief minister for the entire five-year term, drawing a sharp reaction from Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar.

“The high command has given a clear signal in this regard,” Yathindra told reporters in Mysuru.

In a sarcastic reply to Yathindra's statement, Shivakumar said in Mangaluru, “Yathindra is our high command. Whatever he says, I will accept.”

Details on Page 5



DK Shivakumar



Yathindra Siddaramaiah

CM takes up Metro fare hike with Centre

BENGALURU, DHNS: Three days before Namma Metro fares are to rise by 5%, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said he had formally taken up the issue with the Union government, urging it to reconsider the hike.

He also sought reconstitution of the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC) and asked that mecha-

nisms be explored to rationalise the fares, especially for daily commuters, students and low-income groups, while examining policy options that balance financial sustainability with social equity.

Starting February 9, the BM-RCL will raise the fares by Rs 1-5 across all fare zones.

Details on Page 3

Ulsoor Lake to get Rs 100-crore facelift

NAVEEN MENEZES
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru Central City Corporation has undertaken a major development of the Ulsoor Lake at a cost of Rs 100 crore, with works involving removal of silt, construction of a pedestrian bridge and restoration of walkway.

This is also the first major grant allocated to just one waterbody in the recent past.

Other than the city corporation, the minor irrigation department is also involved in the rejuvenation work, which is likely to be completed in a year's time.

So far, the corporation has drained a part of the lake and completed about a kilometre of the walkway works, between

the old kalyani and gurudwara. Officials plan to extend the track towards the direction of Madras Sappers all the way to the swimming pool. The work is modelled on the lines of Sankey Tank.

Shivajinagar MLA Rizwan Arshad said the lake will be transformed into a vibrant, accessible and sustainable waterfront.

► **Ulsoor Lake, Page 4**

The Chancellor, Pro Chancellor, Provost, Vice Chancellor, Members of the Board of Governors, Board of Management, Academic Council, Deans & Directors of CMR University cordially invite you to the

10th Annual Convocation

On Saturday, 7th February 2026 at 10.45 am

at CMR University, Lakeside Campus, Off Hennur-Bagalur Main Road, Chagalahatti, Bangalore-562149, Karnataka, India.

Dr. M. C. Sudhakar

Hon'ble Minister for Higher Education, Government of Karnataka & Pro Visitor, CMR University has kindly consented to preside and confer the degrees

Shri. Sanjeev Kesar

Chief Executive Officer at Arvind Consultancy, Bengaluru will be the Chief Guest and deliver the Convocation address

Dr. K. Balaveera Reddy

Former Vice-Chancellor, VTU Former Chairperson, BoG, NITK, Surathkal

Smt. Sangeeta Katti Kulkarni

Hindustani Classical Vocalist, Musician, Music Composer

Dr. K. C. Ramamurthy, IPS (Retd.)

Former Member of Parliament, Rajya Sabha Chairman, CMR University & CMR Group of Institutions will be the Guest of Honour and award the Medals

Dr. Sabitha Ramamurthy

Chancellor, CMR University will award the Rank Certificates

Shri. Jayadeep K R Reddy

Pro Chancellor

Dr. Tristha Ramamurthy

Provost

Dr. H B Raghavendra

Vice Chancellor

Dr. Praveen R

Pro Vice Chancellor

Dr. Aswani Kumar Unnam

Registrar (Evaluation)

Dr. Mohan Babu G N

Registrar

The event will be live streamed at www.cmr.edu.in/convocation

RSVP: Registrar, CMR University

Ph: 080-25426977/88/79, +91-7022007674

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Quickly

Meghalayamine toll rises to 25

The death toll in the explosion in a coal mine in Meghalaya reached 25 with seven more bodies recovered on Friday. Four more bodies were recovered on Friday while two bodies, which were taken by their families on Thursday, were brought to the hospital while an injured person succumbed. Eighteen bodies were recovered on Thursday.

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Maha: Top leader among 7 Maoists killed

Seven Maoists, including their top leader Prabhakar – who carried a reward of Rs 25 lakh on his head – were killed in a major operation in the Abujhmad jungles in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli. One commando of the C-60 commando unit of Gadchiroli police also lost his life in the operation.

Details on Page 9

4 of family from K'taka found hanging in Bihar

Four tourists, including three women, from Karnataka were found hanging in their room at a dharmshala in Bihar's Nalanda district on Friday, police officials said. The available documents with the police suggested that the victims were members of a family - an elderly woman, her son and two daughters.

Details on Page 3B

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PERPETUAL PARALYSIS

B'luru in a planning conundrum yet again

Two bodies, GBA and BDA, have been mandated to plan Bengaluru. What should be done to ensure continuity and harmony between the two plans?

SHREE D N
BENGALURU, DHNS

Bengaluru has been built and rebuilt for years, and the current development baseline is the Revised Master Plan (RMP) 2015, released in 2007, though planning for it began much earlier. Thus, the basis for the city's development is at least two decades old.

The draft of the next master plan, RMP 2031, was notified in 2020, but the government scrapped it due to procedural issues, including a lack of citizen consultation and court cases, and, above all, shifting political and administrative priorities. The process of dividing the city began, which is now complete.

Recently, the state government has raised the issue of master plans again, with the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) planning the core area and the Bangalore Development Authority (BDA) preparing plans for the doughnut-shaped area around the GBA.

However, is it in the right direction? "How is it in the right direction?" Asks Vijayan Menon, founder of Citizen Action Forum. "We have tried everything in Bengaluru, including BDA planning, state government planning. But we refuse to start planning as per the constitution, which is municipal planning. GBA is not a municipality; it is a state government body. GBA has no municipal members. Just five mayors with the chief minister in charge," Vijayan says.

"The fifth state finance commission does not recognise the GBA as a municipality. They



will not even give them funds. Funds will go to the five corporations and not to the GBA. So where will they get funding?" he asks.

"There are many confusions as well. The GBA Act states that GBA is a planning authority, but the MPC will prepare a draft plan. We have challenged this particular aspect of planning in court," he says.

'Ground-up planning required'

"The constitution requires that city planning be conducted by the MPC. Corporations can be five, but there can be one MPC. It will include the five mayors and elected representatives, and the MPC is authorised to bring in any number of experts from anywhere. What is stopping it?" Vijayan asks.

"So, it will become a locally elected body with the expertise to do the planning, and we are closer to the MPC. Citizens are closer to our elected representatives than to the bureaucracy or the state government," he adds.

"GBA planning cannot be centralised. It should be a ground-up planning. If it is not a municipal planning effort, it will not come from the grassroots. It will be like just a few administrators sitting up there and deciding what should be done for Bengaluru. We have tried that model many times. It doesn't work. The mess that Bengaluru is in is because of that," says Vijayan.

idealistic, absolute solution overnight, but move it in the right direction, and then we will support that action from a practical standpoint. We will protest, but we will still support it. However, what is happening now is unacceptable. This is just a murder of the constitution," he argues.

Challenges to GBA planning

When the government starts planning, a major issue will be in harmonising various plans. "The GBA is a continuous area. But the BDA planning area is now shaped like a doughnut. This is quite unique in the context of planning challenger," says Ravichandar V, a member of the Brand Bengaluru Committee who was instrumental in restructuring Bengaluru into five corporations. "GBA planning is not a problem. They need to do ground-up planning through corporations as required by the 74th Amendment. However, it needs to be synchronised with the planning in the BDA area, which extends around the GBA along its complete outer boundary. The question is, what will be the mechanism to harmonise the two plans?" he asks.

Another point he makes is that a larger share of Bengaluru's problems lies in the outer peripheries. "Just outside the boundaries of the GBA area, is where the maximum mess is with a mix of gram panchayats, zilla parishads, CMCs, TMCs and unregulated building permissions. The outer periphery requires a different kind of attention compared to the GBA area. It is a new, unique challenge we have not encountered before. There needs to be clarity on how this will be resolved," he feels.

Under the MPC and planning rules, the GBA plan must be a joint plan of the five corporations that form the larger, integrated plan. So GBA has two challenges here. That is, one is to harmonise the plans of the five individual corporations underlying it and to harmonise this plan with the plans for the periphery, which is under the jurisdiction of BDA, the planning authority.

Case for dynamic planning

The second, larger issue is the planning framework itself, feels Ravichandar.

"Are we going to stick with the old master plan approach? What we really need more of is what I would call a strategic spatial planning framework," he says.

"Land use and development regulations will be the mechanism by which you will control the end outcomes. But we need a dynamic plan. We cannot sit and say, 'I have now planned for the next 15 years, and there is nothing to be done.' There needs to be some kind of a rolling plan which needs to be

updated every one or two years, in my view," he adds.

"The best approach is to have guiding principles under which the plan is made, and they guide the plan. Are we ready to make that shift to a strategic spatial framework? By making it dynamic and updateable, you can deal with them better," he explains.

Ravichandar said the Brand Bengaluru committee has been asked to recommend new areas for inclusion in the GBA's jurisdiction. The related reports and notifications will take longer to process after the government accepts the suggestions. This process can be another hurdle in harmonising the plans and notifying them, because the jurisdiction will change.

Ravichandar says the logical sequence can be this

- 1) GBA plans the existing area falling under five corporations as a ground-up exercise.
- 2) The government approves the new GBA area, which will be a multi-governance structure consisting of the 5 corporations, CMCs, TMCs, Zilla parishads, and Gram panchayats
- 3) GBA then plans the extra area, which is its current peripheral areas
- 4) BDA gets new areas in its jurisdiction and takes up its planning.

BDA to get additional area?

The question many activists ask is, what is the role of the BDA if the GBA is going to be expanded?

The answer seems simple: Expand BDA further to include newer areas.

"Since the area under BDA has shrunk, we have asked for additional area from the developing areas from the outskirts of Bengaluru to be added to the BDA jurisdiction. Rural parts of Bengaluru can be added to BDA as they all are fast-expanding and need planning," says N A Harris, chairman of Bengaluru Development Authority.

He adds that the BDA is awaiting clarification from the state government, and the idea has found support at various levels.

"As a Bengalee, I feel the planning process should be handled by one body, be it GBA or BDA, to ensure coherence. But at the government level, it has been decided to divide the process between the two. We have to go by it," he says.

The government has not yet set a timeline for completing the master planning process. But Harris hopes that, once the process starts, there will be coordination meetings with the GBA to ensure continuity and coherence in planning.

DH reached out to GBA officials to clarify whether any coordination is underway between the BDA and the GBA on master planning. Sources said it is too early to comment, while officials did not respond to the queries.



Aerial view of Bengaluru city. DH FILE PHOTO/PUSHKAR V

Feedback: pointblank@deccanherald.co.in

METRO

Unmarked drone landing: High Court stays trespass case

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Karnataka High Court on Friday stayed the investigation against a company engaged in research and development in the field of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (UAS). The Doddaballapura police had registered a suo motu FIR against NewSpace Research and Technologies for alleged trespass by a drone belonging to the company.

"The case projects a unique crime registered against an inanimate object. A drone is said to have trespassed into a particular area. So, the offence of criminal trespass is alleged against the drone," Justice M. Nagaprasanna said, adding, "There shall be an interim order of stay

of all investigation pursuant to the registration of Crime No. 24/2026 till the next date of hearing."

On January 29, 2026, a police constable attached to the Doddaballapura Rural Police Station, while on routine rounds, received information about a lightweight drone gliding into a property in Palanajogahalli. An FIR was registered stating that unknown persons had trespassed into private land and that the presence of the drone was perceived to be endangering the life and physical safety of the landowner and others.

The advocate for the petitioner submitted that the company holds a valid authorisation certificate issued by the Directorate General of Civil Aviation (DGCA), recognis-

ing it as a research and development organisation under the UAS regulatory framework. The company also holds an industrial/defence licence granted by the Department for Promotion of Industry and Internal Trade, Union of India, authorising it to undertake the manufacture and development of autonomous systems and unmanned aerial vehicles. The drone had strayed into the field due to battery malfunction, the advocate said.

It was further submitted that the drone involved was a lightweight research prototype made primarily of thermocol, fitted with a commercially available Chinese battery, with an estimated weight not exceeding seven kg, and capable of flying up to an altitude of approximately 100 to 150 feet. The counsel said that though officials produced the relevant

authorisation certificates and licences, police inspector Sadiq Pasha refused to supply a copy of the FIR and the company officials were made to wait for six hours at the police station.

According to the petitioner's counsel, under the applicable Drone Rules, if a drone is operated under an R&D licence in a green belt area and within the operator's own premises, no authority other than the DGCA has jurisdiction to question the operation.

At this stage, Justice Nagaprasanna noted that the police are required to upload the FIR and cannot withhold it from the accused, who are equally entitled to receive a copy. Considering the specific averment regarding denial of the FIR copy, the court directed the police inspector to respond by the next date of hearing.

Bescom holds solar awareness camp, loan mela

BENGALURU, DHNS: Bengaluru Electricity Supply Company Limited (Bescom) has organised a solar awareness camp and a loan mela to help residential consumers access loans to apply for rooftop solar initiatives. The camp has been organised in association with Canara Bank, CV Raman Nagar Branch, at the CV Raman Nagar Bus Stand. Inaugurated on Friday, the camp will continue on Saturday between 10 am and 6 pm.

The central government, under the PM Surya Ghar Muft Bijli Yojana, provides subsidies for the installation of rooftop solar systems for residential consumers. The scheme supports citizens through subsidies and access to affordable loans, making solar energy adoption easier and more accessible. "In alignment with this national mission, Bescom has initiated focused and time-bound strategies to accelerate rooftop solar adoption among consumers," Bescom said in a statement. Many consumers had earlier said that access to loans was a major concern in applying under the programme. Through the camp, Bescom has brought in financial institutions to help consumers access loans more easily.

Chemists' body bans unauthorised bulk sale of narcotic medicines

BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru District Chemists and Druggists Association has ordered a prohibition on unauthorised and abnormal bulk supply of codeine-based narcotic cough syrups, habit-forming medicines, and drugs listed under Schedules H, H1 and X, in view of recent nationwide crackdowns on illicit narcotic and psychotropic drug diversion.

Wholesale pharmacists have been directed to supply restricted and habit-forming medicines only to validly licensed drug entities operating within the approved jurisdiction of the wholesalers, after due verification of licence validity, scope and place of business.

The association has also prohibited supply to any uncensored or informal channels, including semi-wholesalers,

sub-stockists, procuring agents, online intermediaries or entities operating without clear jurisdictional accountability. Institutional stockists have been instructed to ensure that medicines supplied for institutional use are not diverted to the open market, semi-wholesalers, sub-stockists, procuring agents, online intermediaries or any unauthorised entities.

Pharmacists have been directed to refuse and internally flag excessive or disproportionate orders.

The association has further advised members to exercise heightened due diligence in the supply of codeine-based narcotic cough syrups and injectable narcotics, and to implement internal compliance and monitoring mechanisms to identify suspicious ordering

patterns, prevent diversion and safeguard the integrity of the pharmaceutical distribution chain.

Wholesalers are required to maintain complete and verifiable documentation for every transaction, including written purchase orders on official letterhead with seal and signature, a valid drugs licence and GST registration of the buyer, and proper tax invoices with batch numbers, quantities and dates.

The association also warned that any violation or deviation would invite stringent action under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances Act and the Drugs and Cosmetics Act, in addition to serious reputational consequences.



Centre can't cut metro fares, only reconstitute panel

State may have to foot up to Rs 400 cr/yr if rates are revisited

MUTHI UR RAHMAN SIDDIQUI
BENGALURU, DHNS

Chief Minister Siddaramaiah may have urged the Centre to revisit and rationalise metro fares, especially for daily commuters, students and low-income groups, but the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs (MoHUA) can only reconstitute the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC), sources in the know said.

Any fare rationalisation could cost up to Rs 400 crore a year, a burden that would have to be borne entirely by the state government.

Sources also pointed out that committee formation would be a long-drawn-out process. Both governments will have to nominate their representatives — current or former bureaucrats — while the third member and the

chairperson will be a retired High Court judge.

The committee will review BMRCL's finances to assess whether a fare revision is warranted. If a hike is to be avoided or withdrawn, the committee will ask the state whether it is willing to provide Shadow Cash Support (SCS) for cash loss reimbursement and interest-free sub-debt towards loan repayments.

Besides high operational costs, the Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) faces rising maintenance costs due to ageing assets, the expiry of the Defects Liability Period, and expensive spares.

It also bears operational losses and loan repayments entirely, with the state stepping in only if the corporation is unable to meet these expenses. The Centre, despite being a joint stakeholder in the BM-



BMRCL finances (2024-25)			
Gross income		Finance cost (interest payments, bank and foreign exchange charges, etc.)	
Rs 1,190.99 cr		Rs 652.11 crore	
Profit before interest and depreciation		Loss before depreciation	
Rs 484.7 cr		Rs 167.41 crore	
		Depreciation: Rs 576.79 cr	
Net loss before tax		Net loss after tax	
Rs 744.21 crore		Rs 623.93 crore	

RCL, provides no support for them.

For the Delhi Metro, the Centre fully bears the annual cost of around Rs 1,200 crore for deploying about 15,000

CISF personnel at stations. In contrast, security expenses for the Bengaluru Metro are borne by the BMRCL.

The BMRCL also does not have an internally generated

Current Account Surplus (CAS) to meet emergent requirements and depends on the state for support.

In 2023-24, the BMRCL recorded a profit before depreciation (and after interest) of Rs 307.67 crore. However, in 2024-25, this turned into a loss of Rs 167.41 crore, driven by a high finance cost of Rs 652.11 crore.

Without annual fare revision, the BMRCL's net loss would touch Rs 577 crore by 2029-30, the FFC had noted.

As of 2024-25, BMRCL's borrowings stood at Rs 17,071.1 crore, with liabilities and provisions amounting to Rs 8,855.05 crore.

Between 2025-26 and 2029-30, the BMRCL faces loan repayments of Rs 9,651.6 crore and depreciation costs of Rs 5,721.6 crore.

Sources said delays in financial support from the state could impact service quality, especially the upkeep of signalling, electrical and mechanical systems. The state, for instance, is yet to release Rs 400 crore towards loan repayments.

After metro fare hike jolt, CM asks Centre to reconsider move

BENGALURU, DHNS

Three days before Namma Metro fares are to rise by 5%, Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said he had formally taken up the issue with the Union government, urging it to reconsider the hike.

He also sought reconstitution of the Fare Fixation Committee (FFC) and asked that mechanisms be explored to rationalise the fares, especially for daily commuters, students and low-income groups, while examining policy options that balance financial sustainability with social equity.

Starting February 9, Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) will raise the fares by Rs 1-5 across all 10 fare zones, under annual automatic revision recommended by the FFC. The minimum fare will be Rs 11 and the maximum Rs 95.

The hike will come exactly a year after the fares were

increased by an average of 51.55% before discounts and 46.39% after discounts. The fare revision has been criticised by commuters as well as the Opposition.

Responding to the criticism, the chief minister said he fully understands the concern and anguish expressed by commuters, but it was important to know the truth, not political deception.

Under the Metro Railways (Operation and Maintenance) Act, 2002, metro fares are determined by an independent FFC constituted solely by the Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs.

Under Section 37, the FFC's recommendations are binding on the metro administration and must be implemented. Neither the state nor Bangalore Metro Rail Corporation (BMRCL) has the legal authority to override or disregard these recommendations, he noted.

"To now blame Karnataka for a decision legally imposed by the union framework is not just dishonest, it is a deliberate attempt to mislead the public," he stated.

Stating that the state's commitment to public welfare goes far beyond legal boundaries, Siddaramaiah said public transport must remain affordable, inclusive and supportive of everyday livelihoods. "Bengaluru's growth must not come at the cost of commuters' hardship," he added.

The CM urged the opposition BJP to "rise above misinformation and stand together in the interest of the people of Karnataka."

He accused BJP leaders of "staging dramas and shamelessly targeting" the state government. He demanded why the party's MPs from Karnataka did not raise this issue forcefully in Parliament or oppose the high fares at the union level.

Bellandur lake bund widening raises dumping concerns

BENGALURU, DHNS: The widening of a temporary bund, meant for transporting silt into a nearly 60-foot mud road inside Bellandur lake, has triggered alarm among residents, who allege that desilting works have morphed into large-scale dumping within the waterbody. The mud road is different from the buffer road that is coming up between Ejipura and Agara in accordance with the Revised Master Plan (RMP).

According to the Kempapura Yemalur Bellandur Institution Association (KYBIA Trust), a registered public charitable trust working on civic infrastructure and environmental protection, a temporary bund constructed to facilitate the transport of silt is now be-



The widened mud road at Bellandur lake.

ing expanded to nearly 60 feet. The group has also alleged that substantial quantities of soil, debris and construction waste are being dumped within the lakebed, effectively increasing ground levels.

In a press meet held on Friday, the Trust expressed apprehension that the bund is being strengthened in a manner that could enable its conversion into a permanent

road. Such actions, the group added, would violate orders of the National Green Tribunal (NGT), which has issued clear directions on the protection of lakes, wetlands and their buffer zones.

The Trust also challenged the BDA, which is spending hundreds of crores on the lake in the name of rejuvenation, to show evidence of where the silt has been dumped.

City police rescue missing elderly woman, child

BENGALURU, DHNS: In the past week, the Bengaluru City Police have carried out multiple missing person rescue operations.

On February 4, at around 12.31 pm, a member of the public alerted Namma 112 after spotting an unidentified elderly woman, about 60 years old, appearing disoriented and suffering from memory loss near Bannappa Park Road in the Cubbonpete area of Nagarathpete. Immediately, Namma 112 dispatched Hoysala-27 personnel, including ASI Ramesh and a police constable, who reached

the location and shifted her to the Halasuru Gate Police Station for further care and assistance.

Subsequent inquiries revealed that a missing person complaint for the woman had been registered a day earlier at the Cottonpet Police Station. The police were able to confirm her identity and reunite her safely with her family.

A five-year-old child was also rescued in a similar operation on Wednesday. The father of the child informed Namma 112 about the incident, reporting

that the child had gone missing from the BDA Complex under the jurisdiction of the RT Nagar Police Station.

Acting immediately, the Namma 112 staff dispatched Hoysala-125 personnel — ASI Ravinandana Gowda and APC Chinnappa — who reached the spot within five minutes.

With the support of the public, the police team went to a nearby mosque and made an announcement through the public address system. Shortly thereafter, the child was traced and safely reunited with his father.

Fire guts over 50 sheds near Kudlu Gate

BENGALURU, DHNS: An accidental fire broke out in an open area near Kudlu Gate off Sarjapur Road, where illegal migrants were residing, gutting more than 50 temporary sheds on Friday.

A senior police officer said the incident occurred around 5.45 am, and four fire tenders rushed to the spot and doused the blaze after several hours. Fire department officials said no casualties were reported in the incident.

Preliminary inquiries revealed that the fire was accidental, though the exact cause is yet to be ascertained. The Parappa Aagrahara police have registered a case and are conducting further investigation.

It is suspected that a high-tension electric wire lying in the area could have been one of the factors that triggered the mishap. Scrap materials stored at the spot were also completely gutted in the fire.



SRI SIDDARAMAIAH
Hon'ble Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka



Water Resources Department
Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited
(A Government of Karnataka Enterprise)





SRI D.K. SHIVAKUMAR
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka

LAYING OF FOUNDATION STONE FOR BENNEHALLI FLOOD CONTROL WORKS

AND INAUGURATION, BHOOMIPOOJA PROGRAMME OF VARIOUS WORKS IN NAVALGUND VIDHANA SABHA CONSTITUENCY

Date: 08-02-2026 | Time: 3:00 PM
Venue: Shiraguppi, Hubbli Taluk, Dharward District

— Laying of Foundation Stone —

SRI SIDDARAMAIAH
Hon'ble Chief Minister, Government of Karnataka

— In the August Presence of —

SRI BASAVARAJ S HORATTI
Hon'ble Chairman
Karnataka Legislative Council

SRI SANTOSH S.LAD
Hob'ble Minister for Labour and
Dharward District In-charge

— Guest of Honor —
SRI BASAVARAJ BOMMAI
Hon'ble Former Chief Minister
Government of Karnataka and MP, Haveri

SRI D.K. SHIVAKUMAR
Hon'ble Deputy Chief Minister and Minister for
Water Resources, Bengaluru City Development and
In-charge of Bengaluru City District,
Government of Karnataka

SRI KRISHNA BYREGOWDA
Hon'ble Minister for Revenue and
Hassan District In-charge

SRI PRALHAD JOSHI
Hon'ble Union Minister for Consumer Affairs,
Food & Public Distribution and New & Renewable
Energy, Government of India, New Delhi

SRI H.K.PATIL
Hon'ble Minister for Law and
Parliamentary Affairs and Gadag District In-charge

— Special Guests —
SRI ABBAYYA PRASAD
Hon'ble Chairman, Karnataka Slum Development Board
and Hon'ble MLA, Hubballi - Dharward (East)

SRI SALEEM AHMED
Hon'ble Government Chief Whip
Karnataka Legislative Council

— Presided by —
SRI N.H. KONAREDDY
Hon'ble MLA, Navalgund

All Dharward and Gadag District Hon'ble Ministers, MP's MLA's and MLC's and Chairmen of Commissionerate and all Corporation, Boards Chairmen, Vice Chairmen and Members are cordially invited

— Presence of Superiority —

DR. SHALINI RAJNEESH, I.A.S.
Hon'ble Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka

SRI GAURAV GUPTA, I.A.S.
Addl Chief Secretary, Government of Karnataka

SRI KRISHNAMURTHY B. KULKARNI, K.A.S.
Hon'ble Secretary, Water Resources Department, Government of Karnataka

SRI RAJESH AMMINABHAVI, K.A.S.
Hon'ble Managing Director, Karnataka Neeravari Nigama Limited

WATER IS THE FORCE OF LIFE

WATER IS THE PRECIOUS WEALTH

SAVE WATER

PROTECT THE WATER

GBA calls for public role in reviving underused city spaces

194 locations have
been shortlisted

BENGALURU, DHNS

In a major push towards making Bengaluru more liveable, the Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) on Friday called for active citizen and corporate participation to breathe new life into underutilised urban pockets.

At the 'Open House' held at Town Hall, GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao urged residents, NGOs and corporate entities to collaborate in transforming "dead spaces" into vibrant community hubs. The initiative, titled, "Bayasidante Bayalu" (Open Space as Desired), aims to repurpose neglected land into pedestrian-friendly zones and recreational spots.

"We have identified numerous spots across the city that currently serve no purpose. By partnering with CSR wings and startups, we can convert these into safe, attractive public spaces," the Commissioner said.

He laid particular emphasis on women's safety, noting that these redesigned spaces must ensure a secure environment for women to navigate independently, especially at night.

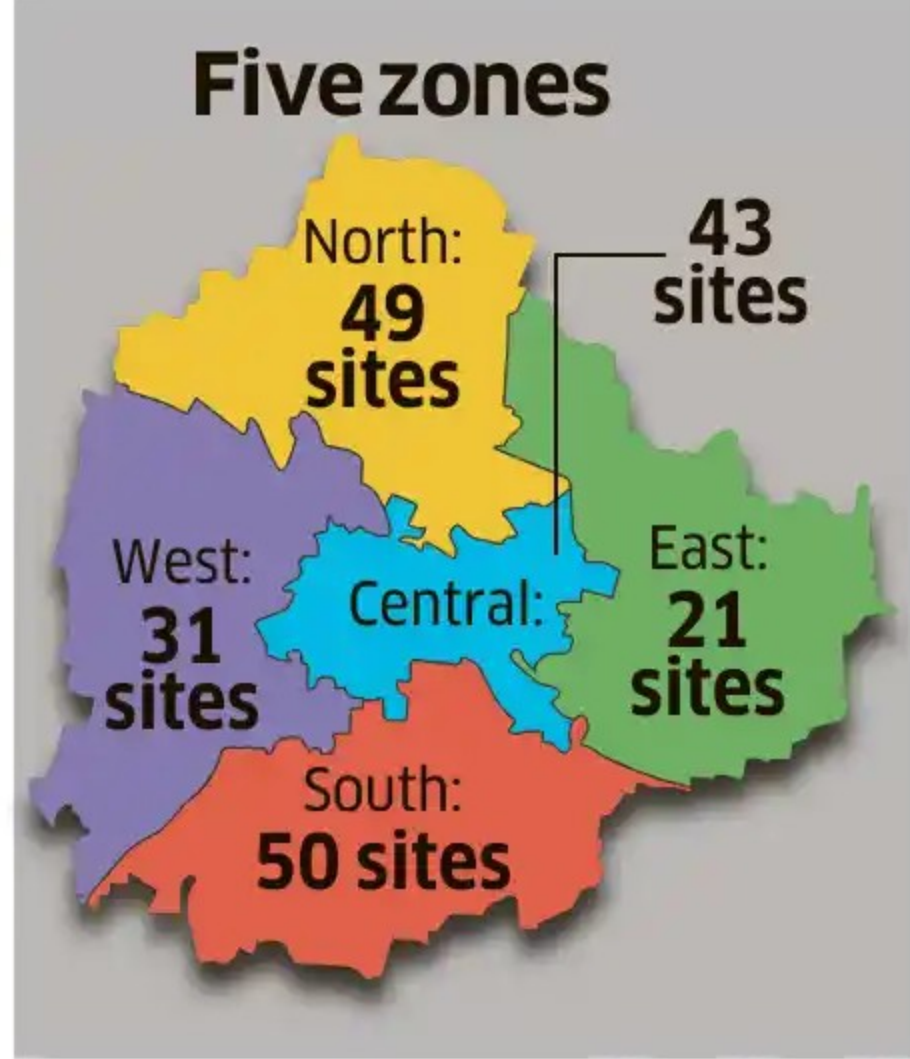
The Commissioner also directed all five city corporations



GBA Chief Commissioner Maheshwar Rao speaks to residents and NGO representatives at the Town Hall on Friday.

under the GBA to organise similar outreach programmes to solicit designs and funding models from the public.

The project, a collaboration between the GBA, Sensing Local and the Institute of Urban Designers India (IUDI), began its mapping phase in May 2025. Following overwhelming public feedback, 194 locations have been shortlisted for transformation.



Funding and implementation

GBA Chief Engineer B S Prahlad highlighted the role of the newly established 'PPP Cell' in fast-tracking these projects. While 25 sites have already received financial approval under

the National Clean Air Programme (NCAP), the GBA is looking at "collaborative financing" to cover the rest. This involves blending government funds with CSR contributions and philanthropic capital.

Techie's wife murder case: One more accomplice from Varanasi arrested

MANJUNATH SHETTA
BENGALURU, DHNS

The Magadi Road police have arrested a key suspect and two others in connection with the murder of a woman bank employee who was shot by her techie husband, taking the total number of arrests in the case to five.

Abhimanyu Singh (32) worked as a spy, while two associates of hitman Moulesh were

also part of the crime.

Investigating officials have found that Abhimanyu Singh, a native of Varanasi, acted as a "spy" for Balamurugan by closely tracking the movements of his wife and passing on live updates.

Abhimanyu, an employee of a jewellery-making shop, had accompanied Balamurugan to procure weapons from Bihar, as the latter did not know Hindi. They travelled to Bihar by train and purchased two weapons.

After returning to Bengaluru, Balamurugan handed over one of the weapons to hitman Moulesh, a habitual offender, who later took it to his native Salem and was subsequently caught by the Tamil Nadu police in a house burglary case. The pistol was recovered during his arrest.

Abhimanyu was regularly visiting a gym close to Bhuvaneshwari's workplace and kept watch on her movements. He allegedly

shared real-time information with Balamurugan on December 23, when the latter opened fire on her, killing her on the spot. The police are continuing their investigation to trace the illegal arms dealer, and a special team is yet to visit Bihar.

All the arrested men have been remanded to judicial custody, and the police are likely to file a chargesheet before the court shortly, an officer said.

Selva Balamurugan (40)

allegedly shot his wife, Bhuvaneshwari (39), with a country-made pistol on December 23 and surrendered before the police soon after the incident. A few days later, police nabbed Moulesh, who had taken Rs 1.5 lakh from Balamurugan to execute the crime. However, Moulesh did not carry out the murder as he demanded more money, and two of his associates had also agreed to help him in the plan.

Biker harasses techie, damages car

BENGALURU, DHNS: A techie was harassed and his car damaged by an aggressive biker at Madavara Junction on Thursday.

The victim, Aditya, was driving from Nelamangala to Manyata Tech Park when a minor dispute led the biker to block his path. The accused reportedly used abusive language, made obscene gestures and smashed the car's side-view mirror.

The biker also issued threats to the driver before fleeing the scene. Following a complaint, the Madanayakanahalli police have registered a case under BNS sections pertaining to criminal intimidation, mischief causing damage and public nuisance, and are currently reviewing CCTV footage to identify the culprit.

"Road rage is an unacceptable breach of public safety. We are committed to taking strict action against those who take the law into their own hands on city roads," a senior police officer said.

Police have reiterated that road rage is a serious offence and urged motorists to report such incidents immediately via the emergency helpline.

Man booked for posing as health officer to cheat business owners

BENGALURU, DHNS: Officials of the Bengaluru Central City Corporation have filed a complaint against an individual for cheating business owners by impersonating a health officer.

According to the complaint, the accused, Tilak Srinivas, falsely represented himself as a Senior Health Inspector of the Central City Corporation and collected money from business

owners through his personal mobile payment scanner on the pretext of processing trade licence applications.

The accused allegedly defrauded business owners within the limits of Sudhamanagar Ward and Hombegowdanagar Ward under the Chickpet Division.

The Medical Health Officer (Chickpet Division) immediately

submitted a written complaint to the jurisdictional police station for necessary action.

Recently, the GBA had urged trade owners to ensure that their trade licences are renewed by February 28. After February 28, the corporations will levy a penalty, GBA Commissioner Maheshwar Rao had said.

◆ IN THE CITY ◆

GENERAL
Book release: Ruskin Bond's autobiography 'A Writer's Lonely Walk' Organised by Kamadhenu Book Bhavana; S Diwakar, KE Radhakrishna, R Lakshminarayana to attend; BM Sri Foundation, N.R. Colony; 10.00 am

Launch of 'MSIL Chits' new software and mobile app: Siddaramaiah, DK Shivakumar, Basavaraj Horatti, U T Khader, M B Patil; Organised by: Mysore Sales International Limited; Banquet Hall, Vidhana Soudha; 10.30 am

Annual Cartoon Exhibition by Kannada Cartoonists: BV Panduranga Rao, G N Mohan, V R C Shekhar, BG Gujjarappa; Organised by: Karnataka Cartoonists Association; Indian Institute of World Culture, Basavanagudi; 11 am

'Being Hyper Human' International Photography Exhibition: Organised by: Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design and Technology, Manipal Academy of Higher Education; Venkatappa Art Gallery, Kasturba Road; 6 pm

CULTURAL
Valedictory of lecture series on poet Lakshmeesha's "Jaimini Bharata": Speaker: Pavagada Prakasharao; Shivaratni Deshikendra Swamiji, Shivananda Bharathi Chintamani Swamiji to participate; Organised by: Dr Pavagada Prakasharao Amrita Mahotsava Committee; Patti Auditorium, N R Colony; 5.45 pm

Yakshagana performance in English: 'Jambavati Kalyana': Bhagavathike: Deepak Tulupule, Chende: Prithvi Badekilla, Maddale: Prajesh Dendadka, Chakratala: Pradeep B: Aarathi Patramea, Sri Shankar Joyisa B., Sibanthi Padmanabha, Teju Vignesh, Samvruth Sharma, Varidhi to perform; Organised by: The Mythic Society, Indian

Council of Historical Research; Janaseva Vidyakendra, Channanahalli, Magadi Road; 7.00 pm

Sri Rama Lalitha Kala Mandira Annual Spring Music Festival: Vocal concert by Vignesh Ishwar; H M Smitha on violin, Delhi Sairam on mridanga, Anirudh V. Athreya on Khanjira, Bangalore Gayana Samaja, K R Road. 5.30 pm

◆ CITYWEATHER ◆

FORECAST	
Mainly Clear sky	
TEMPERATURES	
Maximum	29.5°C
Minimum	16.0°C
Rainfall (as of 8:30 am) --	
Humidity (as of 5:30 pm) NA%	
Sunset (Feb 7)	6:22 pm
Sunrise (Feb 8)	6:45 am
Moonrise	10:17 pm
Moonset	9:40 am

(Relevant data recorded at 5.30 pm) Source: IMD

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that, I, Mrs Lakshamma wife of Mr Yellappa, residing at #58, Thigilara Bidhi, Damarayswamy Temple, Jigani, Bangalore- 560105 ("Owner") am the present owner of land measuring 21 guntas each in Survey No 351/2 situated at Jigani village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District ("said Land"), and that some of my original documents described in the Schedule ("Original Deeds"), have been misplaced and is not traceable. A lost report has been lodged with the Police unit, Bengaluru Rural vide Serial No 2042449/2026 on 3 February 2026.

Any person having any share, right, title, interest, claim, and/or demand in respect of the said Land or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever or otherwise howsoever ("Claim"), by virtue of having custody or possession of the Original Deed are hereby requested to contact the undersigned within 10 (ten) days from the date of publication, of this notice, failing which, the Claim shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. If any person has found the Original Deed, they are requested to return the Original Deed to the Owner, or to the undersigned Advocate at the address described below. Further, the public is hereby cautioned not to deal with the said Land based on the missing Original Deed other than with Owner and it is also notified that any such transactions entered into in respect of the said Land shall be considered illegal.

Sl No	Description of the Last Original Document
1.	Sale Deed dated 30 December 1971 registered as document No. 2493/1971-72, book-1, pages 24-25, volume 1163, at the office of the Sub-Registrar Anekal
2.	Rectification Deed dated 7 July 1998 registered as document No. 1363/1998-99, at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Anekal

Dated this 07th day of February, 2026.

Mrs Lakshamma
wife of Mr Yellappa
Residing at #58, Thigilara Bidhi, Damarayswamy Temple, Jigani, Bangalore- 560105, Phone No. 9845700300

Metro Railway, Kolkata

Tender Notice for e-tendering is invited by Principal Chief Engineer, Metro Railway for the following work: Name of work: Supply, fixing, commissioning & maintenance of Rail Gauge Face Lubricator machine at Blue Line (Station Dakshineswar to Station Kavi Subhash) of Metro Railway Kolkata. Approx Cost of Work: Rs.5,88,99,616.20, Earnest Money: Rs.4,44,500.00, Completion Period: 60 Months, Date and Time of Closing: 27.02.2026 at 12:00 Hrs. The Tender Document and other details can be obtained from the website www.irops.gov.in. Amendments/Corrigendum, if any, would be hosted only on the website. Abridged e-Tender Notice No.: Civil-2547-2026 (Open)

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IN THE HIGH COURT OF KARNATAKA

NOTICE TO THE RESPONDENT NO.4 VIDE COURT ORDER DATED 28.01.2026 WRIT PETITION NO.2215/2024 (GM-MM, S) SRI B R PRADEEP S/o Rangegowda, Aged about 39 years, R/At No. 273, 2nd Main, 2nd Block, II Block, Near Sophia School, Paparayapalya, Nagabavi, Bengaluru - 560072. ...PETITIONER

VS

THE STATE OF KARNATAKA, Rep. by its Chief Secretary, Bengaluru - 560001, & Others. ...RESPONDENTS

TO, RESPONDENT NO.4 M/S SAPTHAGIRI GRANITES, By Managing Partner- K P Purushottaman, Aged Major, No.7 and 8, 1st Cross, Kanakapura Main Road, Near Railway Gate, Arabic College Post, Bengaluru - 560045.

Whereas the above named petitioner praying this Court to and also on petition filed under Articles 226 & 227 of the Constitution of India, praying to:

a. Issue a Writ of Mandamus or any other order or Direction, directing 3rd Respondent Director to consider the Application at No. 20 dated 09.04.2015 filed by this Petitioner over an area of 04.00 Acres as shown in the sketch in Sy.No.83 of Hiriyachenhalli Village, Shidlaghatta Taluka, Chikballapur Dist., on priority & "on first come first served basis" produced at ANNEKURE-C; and/or

b. Issue a Writ of Mandamus or any other Order or Direction, directing 3rd Respondent Director to restrict the Ql. area applied for grant subsequently by 4th & 5th Respondents at No. 43 & 44 dated 27.04.2015, as per ANNEKURE-F & G, excluding an area of 04.00 Acres in Sy.No.83 of Hiriyachenhalli Village, Shidlaghatta Taluka, Chikballapur Dist., as applied by this Petitioner previously on priority & "on first come first served basis" as per ANNEKURE-C;

C. Issue a Writ of Certiorari or any other order or direction directing to quash or set aside undelivered Order No. Ganhat/UM (Kha A), CKB / kaGaGUA No. 20 / 2015/2023-24/9115 dated 06.11.2023 passed by 3rd Respondent Director & Competent Authority produced at ANNEKURE-A; without considering Petitioner's Ql. Application at No. 20 dated 09.04.2015 produced at ANNEKURE-C, ON FIRST COME FIRST SERVED BASIS.

Notice is hereby given to you to appear in this Court either in person or through counsel duly instructed or through someone authorised by law, to act for you in the above Writ Petition at 10.30 A.M. in forenoon on 04.03.2026 case you intend to contest the Writ Petition. If you fail to appear, the same will be dealt with, heard and decided in your absence.

Issued under my hand and the seal of this Court, on this Wednesday the 28th day of January 2026.

BY ORDER OF THE COURT
ASSISTANT REGISTRAR

GOVERNMENT OF INDIA

Ministry of Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises
INSTITUTE FOR DESIGN OF ELECTRICAL MEASURING INSTRUMENTS, MUMBAI
वैद्युतिक मापन उपकरण अभिकल्पन संस्थान, मुंबई

Government Certificate course on ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE & DATA SCIENCE

Course Time (ऑनलाइन) Course Duration: 8 Days
7.30 PM TO 8.30 PM ONLINE 15 Feb. 10.22 Feb. 2026
Email ID: training@idemi.org Website: www.idemi.org

Content: Introduction to Artificial Intelligence, data science, Data Wrangling & Cleaning Techniques (with practical), Exploratory Data Analysis (EDA), Feature Engineering & Selection Introduction to Machine learning with supervised and unsupervised learning approaches, with ethics and future.

Course Fees Regular 3000 +18 % GST Course Fees Student 2000 + 18% GST (Fees are not refundable)

Data preprocessing (Full Hands on)
Exploratory data analysis (Full Hands on)

हमें कॉल करें / Call us between 10 am to 6 pm
Contact - 8007765693, 9403566219, 9699772711, 9869087617

SOUTHERN RAILWAY

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM DIVISION
TENDER NOTICE No. V-EG-T Notice-32-2025-26.
Dated: 04.02.2026

Sl. No.	Name of the Work:	Approximate Cash Value (₹)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Period of Completion	Closing / Opening
1	Escorting, operation, and trip maintenance ("X" check) of M/s Cummins make DA sets available in power cars of trains maintained at coaching depots in Thiruvananthapuram Division of Southern Railway through OEM for a period of two years.	₹ 728,79,513/-	₹ 5,14,400.00/-	₹ 11,800/-	24 Months	@ 1700 Hrs on 25.02.2026

Tender No: V-EG-T-32-2025-26

Sl. No.	Name of the Work:	Approximate Cash Value (₹)	Earnest Money Deposit (₹)	Cost of Tender Form (₹)	Period of Completion	Closing / Opening
2	Escorting, operation, and trip maintenance ("X" check) of Kiorokor Oil Engines Limited make DA sets available in power cars of trains maintained at coaching depots in Thiruvananthapuram Division of Southern Railway through OEM for a period of two years.	₹ 6,77,82,313/-	₹ 4,88,900/-	₹ 11,800/-	24 Months	@ 1700 Hrs on 25.02.2026

For further details visit internet site www.irops.gov.in or contact Office of the Senior Divisional Electrical / General / Thiruvananthapuram.

Divisional Railway Manager (Electrical General),
Thiruvananthapuram - 14
(For and on behalf of the President of India)

S. E. RAILWAY - TENDER

For and on behalf of President of India, the Divisional Railway Manager (Engg.), South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur-721301 invites e-Tender for the following works before 15:00hrs. on the date mentioned against items and will be opened at 15:30hrs.: SI. No.; Tender No.; Description of Work; Tender Value & Earnest Money respectively: (1); E-KGP-EAST-02-2026; Renovation and Upgradation of Multi-Storeyed Type-II and Type-III Staff Quarters at the North and South Side Colony of Santragachi under the jurisdiction of Sr. DEN/East/Kharagpur; ₹ 2,00,44,454.34; ₹ 2,50,200.00; (2); E-KGP-EAST-03-2026; Madpur; Provision for extension, raising, resurfacing of platform & other amenities; ₹ 1,95,87,312.73; ₹ 2,47,900.00; (3); E-KGP-EAST-05-2026; 1) Construction of New staff Quarters 10 units (typ-II) at BARGACHIA and AMTA under ADEN/SRC; 2) Uuberia: Construction of new office room and store of SSE/P.Way/Uuberia; ₹ 4,92,07,441.04; ₹ 3,96,000.00; (4); E-KGP-HQ-04-2026; Construction of boundary wall on 3rd Avenue under the jurisdiction of ADEN/Settlement/Kharagpur (2nd Call); ₹ 41,16,949.40; ₹ 82,300.00; (5); E-KGP-EAST-04-2026; Bauria: Provision for extension of platform cover shed on extended portion & other amenities at Bauria station 2) Andul: Provision for extension of platform, cover shed on extended portion & other amenities at Andul (ADL) station; ₹ 25,31,42,733.26; ₹ 14,15,700.00; (6); E-KGP-South-03-2026; Construction of Limited Height Subway in lieu of manned LC No. 44 by Box pushing technique in Lakshannath Road-Jaleswar section under the jurisdiction of ADEN (South)/Kharagpur; ₹ 11,50,30,953.38; ₹ 7,25,200.00; (7); E-KGP-South-04-2026; Execution of the work of: (1) Cess repair & strengthening of bank under SSE/P.Way/Hijli and construction of central drain in between Belda-Nikursini under SSE/P.Way/Dantan, (ii) Augmentation facilities in RGM siding at Hijli & Dantan under ADEN (South)/Kharagpur; ₹ 2,94,81,164.17; ₹ 2,97,400.00; (8); E-KGP-South-05-2026; Improvement & Standardization of Over Run line, Dead End & Sand Hump in HJNMBR-Bhadrak section under Sr. DEN (South)/Kharagpur. ₹ 3,79,05,489.42; ₹ 3,39,500.00. Tender Document Cost : ₹ 0.00 (for SI. No. 1 to 8); Date of opening : 19/02/2026 (for SI. No. 1 to 3), 20/02/2026 (for SI. No. 4), 26/02/2026 (for SI. No. 5 & 6) & 27/02/2026 (for SI. No. 7 & 8); Completion period of the work : 15 Months (for SI. No. 1, 3 & 5), 12 Months (for SI. No. 2 & 8), 6 Months (for SI. No. 4) & 18 Months (for SI. No. 6 & 7); Bidding Start Date: For SI. No. 1 to 3 from 05.02.2026 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 19/02/2026. Bidding Start Date: For SI. No. 4 from 06.02.2026 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 20/02/2026. Bidding Start Date: For SI. No. 5 & 6 from 12.02.2026 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 26/02/2026. Bidding Start Date: For SI. No. 7 & 8 from 13.02.2026 and up to 15:00 hrs. on 27/02/2026. Interested tenderers may visit website www.irops.gov.in for full details/descriptions/specifications of the tenders and submit their bids online. In no case manual tenders for these works will be accepted. N.B.: Prospective bidders may regularly visit www.irops.gov.in to participate in all tenders. (PR-1157)

PUBLIC NOTICE

NOTICE is hereby given that, I, Mr Mandava Venu Gopal Naidu son of Mr Chinna Subba Naidu, residing at No. 1-36, Cherlopalli, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh-517641 ("Owner") am the present owner of land measuring 14 guntas each in Survey Nos 377/3, 377/5 and 377/6 situated at Jigani village, Jigani Hobli, Anekal Taluk, Bangalore Urban District ("said Land"), and that some of my original documents described in the Schedule ("Original Deeds"), have been misplaced and is not traceable. A lost report has been lodged with the Police unit, Bengaluru Rural vide Serial No 2042412/2026 on 3 February 2026.

Any person having any share, right, title, interest, claim, and/or demand in respect of the said Land or any part thereof, in any manner whatsoever or otherwise howsoever ("Claim"), by virtue of having custody or possession of the Original Deed are hereby requested to contact the undersigned within 10 (ten) days from the date of publication, of this notice, failing which, the Claim shall be considered to have been waived and/or abandoned. If any person has found the Original Deed, they are requested to return the Original Deed to the Owner, or to the undersigned Advocate at the address described below. Further, the public is hereby cautioned not to deal with the said Land based on the missing Original Deed other than with Owner and it is also notified that any such transactions entered into in respect of the said Land shall be considered illegal.

Sl No	Description of the Last Original Document
1.	Sale Deed dated 15 November 2001 registered as document No. 5269/2001-02, at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Anekal
2.	Sale Deed dated 8 August 2000 registered as document No. 2029/2000-01, book-1, volume 2223, pages 57-60, at the office of the Sub-Registrar Basavanagudi (Anekal)
3.	Agreement of Sale dated 22 November 2011 registered as document No. JGN-1-06227/2011-12 at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Jigani
4.	Sale Deed dated 15 November 2001 registered as document No. 5271/2001-02, at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Anekal
5.	Sale Deed dated 15 November 2001 registered as document No. 5270/2001-02, at the office of the Sub-Registrar, Anekal

Dated this 7th day of February, 2026

Mr Mandava Venu Gopal Naidu
son of Mr Chinna Subba Naidu
Residing at No. 1-36, Cherlopalli, Chittoor, Andhra Pradesh-517641, Phone No. 9845700300

NORTH CENTRAL RAILWAY

E-Tender Notice No. : JHS-N-W-08-26 Date : 05.02.2026

E-Tendering Tender Notice

Sr. Divisional Signal & Telecommunication Engineer /Jhansi, DRM's office, Jhansi, for and on behalf of President of India invite open Tender through on Line (E-Tendering) for the following works:

E-Tender No. : JHS-N-W-08-26 Approx Cost : Rs. 27796798.73

Description of work : Provision of S&T work in connection with Rebuilding of existing overhead steel girder bridges of clear span 12.2M by PSC Slab of Bridges in BINA-DHO Section of Jhansi Division.

Earnest Money : Rs. 289000/- Cost of Tender Form : Nil.

Opening of tender : 06.03.2026 Time 15:00

Completion period from issue of letter of acceptance : 12 Months

* Tender on line can be submitted upto 15.00 hrs on 06.03.2026 * For full details and submission of bid please see the Indian Railways website www.irops.gov.in (NORTH CENTRAL RLY/JHANSI DIVISION-SAND T) 275/26 (AS)

© CPONCR North central railways CPONCR © www.ncr.indianrailways.gov.in

DOUBLING OF TRACK BETWEEN FURKATING AND SELENGHAT STATION

Tender Notice No.: CON/2026/JAN/06, Dated: 31-01-2026. E - Tender are invited by the undersigned for the following work. Tender No.: CE/CON/FT/ EPC/2026/03; Name of Work: Doubling of Track between Furkating (331.138 km) (excluding) and Selenghat stations (including) up to km 394.30 (63.162km) including Electrification & Signalling works in connection with Furkating - New Tinsukia doubling project of Northeast Frontier Railway in the state of Assam on EPC mode. Approx. Value : ₹805,15,92,073.71/-; Date & time of closing of tender at 14:30 hrs. on 20-03-2026 and opening at 15:30 hrs. on 26-03-2026. For complete information and tender document of e-Tender will be available in website www.irops.gov.in

Chief Engineer/Con/LMG Project/Maligaon
NORTHEAST FRONTIER RAILWAY Construction Organization

Serving Customers With A Smile

JHARIA REHABILITATION AND DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY, DHANBAD

e-Procurement Notice
Tender Reference No: JRDA/CIVIL/25-26/47/
Date: 05.02.2026

Sl. No.	Name of Work	Annual Cleaning and Sanitation Work for 3 Years at Phase-I, Belgaria Township, JRDA (3 rd Call)
1.	Estimated Cost	Rs. 2,14,10,195.00
2.	EMD	Rs. 4,28,300.00
3.	Tender Document Cost	Rs. 10,000.00
4.	Time of Completion	03 Years
5.	Date/Time from which bid is available for online bidding	09.02.2026 at 03:00 PM
6.	Last Date/Time for on-line submission of bids	16.02.2026 at 5:00 PM
7.	Date and Time of Bid Opening	18.02.2026 at 11:30 AM
8.	Name and Address of Officer inviting tender	Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad Hatia More, Golf Ground Road, Hirapur, Dhanbad - 826001 Jharkhand, India Email: infojrda.dhn@gmail.com

Note : 1. Only e-tenders will be accepted.
2. Further details can be seen on website – <https://jharkhandtenders.gov.in>

Sd/-
Head of Department (Civil), JRDA, Dhanbad

PR 372443 Rural Development(25-26/D)

Government of Jharkhand Jharkhand Flying Institute

A Society Regd. Under Department of Cabinet Secretariat & Vigilance (Civil Aviation Division)
State Hangar, Birsu Munda Airport, Hinoo Ranchi-834002
E-mail-jfi.govtfly@gmail.com, Website-www.jharkhandaviation.in

Ref. No. - A/c-GT/JFI/69/2025/75 /Ranchi, Date:- 05/02/ 2026

Corrigendum-02

e-Global Tender issued through EoI Ref No- A/c-GT/JFI/69/2025/43, dated:20.01.2026 for purchase of Brand-New Two-Seater Trainee Aircraft in 1st Phase, Initially 04 aircraft for training purpose (P.R. No-371204 & 371860) for Jharkhand Flying Institute.

2. In view of unavoidable circumstances, the revised BoQ has been duly uploaded on the Jharkhand Tenders portal at www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in. It should be understood as modified to this extent.

3. Other Terms & Conditions of NIT & e-Global Tender will remain the same.

4. This Corrigendum is also available on the website www.jharkhandtenders.gov.in

Sd/-
Capt. P. C. Sinha
Managing Director-cum-Director (Ops.)
Jharkhand Flying Institute

PR 372466 Civil Aviation(25-26/D)

Fire erupts at waste disposal unit in Karwar

KARWAR, DHNS: Fire erupted at a waste disposal unit run by the Karwar City Municipal Council in Shirwad in the early hours of Friday morning. The fire started in the pile with large quantity of plastic waste and other trash, around 3 am, said the staff at the unit. Fire and Emergency Services personnel from Karwar, Ankola, and those from the fire unit attached to the Birla Grasim Industries in Binaga, rushed to the spot to douse the flames. It took considerable effort to check the spread of the flames, and it was well into the evening by the time the fire was brought under control. KarwarCMC Environmental Engineer Sunil Gawade said that the machinery and sheds at the waste disposal unit escaped unscathed in the fire. “Some small components did sustain damage, although tonnes upon tonnes of waste were reduced to ashes in the fire. We took precautionary measures to prevent neighbouring piles of trash from catching fire,” he headed.

Only handful of K’taka students at S’mogga campus of Raksha varsity

Awareness drive on among students, parents on courses

S K NRUPATHUNGA SHIVAMOGGA, DHNS: The three-year-old regional campus of the Rashtriya Raksha University (RRU) here has more students from outside Karnataka and less from the state, due to lack of awareness about it here. Also, it is yet to reach its maximum strength of 30 each for undergraduate and 20 for postgraduate courses. Efforts are on to enhance enrolment by visiting pre-university colleges in the state and creating awareness among students. According to Shivamogga

campus authorities, many parents and students in Karnataka lack knowledge about the university and courses offered by it. Besides, they are still not sure about the job opportunities after doing these courses. Authorities on the campus have decided to educate students and parents about the scope and job opportunities available for those who take up these courses. They said a four-year BA course in security management and BA/BSc in defence and strategic studies are being offered for 2026-27. Also on offer are two-year PG courses in criminology



An aerial view of the regional campus of the Rashtriya Raksha University in Shivamogga. Due to lack of publicity, more students from neighbouring states have enrolled here than those from Karnataka.

& forensic science, clinical psychology and defence & strategic studies. The university provides hostel facility for students. Those who have passed PUC in any stream with minimum 55% marks are eligible to apply for under-graduate (UG) courses. Similarly, graduates in any stream with 55% can

There are 15 teachers and two non-teaching staff presently. Initially, students from other states like Kerala, Andhra Pradesh, Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra enrolled for courses here. A handful of students from Karnataka joined last year. The number is likely to increase in the coming years. Currently, the university is functioning out of a rented building at Ragigudda and land has been allotted for its own campus at nearby Thammadihalli. But construction work is yet to start. The institute had offered BA in security management (four years) and PG diploma in police management in 2023-24. The main campus of RRU is in Gandhinagar, Gujarat. It runs regional campuses also in Uttar Pradesh, Arunachal Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Puducherry, Jammu & Kashmir. A campus is coming up in Leh & Ladakh.

Backward Classes department clears pending student scholarships

DHARWAD, DHNS: The Backward Classes Welfare Department has cleared all pending student scholarships. DH had published a report titled ‘1.6 lakh BC, minority students in distress without scholarship on January 20. BC Welfare Department Commissioner K A Dayanand told DH that scholarships for the last five academic years — from 2021 to 2025-26 — have been disbursed. He said that under the post-matric fee reimbursement programme, 1,26,181 pending applications have been cleared and Rs 129.05 crore disbursed. The department received 5.92 lakh applications for the 2025-26 academic year seeking scholarships. Of these, 1,88,849 have been approved and Rs 128.56 crore has been released. Under the college fee reimbursement programme, 1,75,337 eligible students have received Rs 211.58 crore, he added. Similarly, under the Vidyasiri food and hostel programme, 41,111 students received financial assistance amounting to Rs 61.68 crore. “In the interest of students, the department had extended the last date for submitting applications for scholarships, fee reimbursement and the Vidyasiri scheme till January 31,” Dayanand said.

BJP MP seeks action against airlines for halting ops from Belagavi airport

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Karnataka BJP Rajya Sabha member Irranna Kadadi on Friday urged the Union Ministry of Civil Aviation to take strict action against airlines that have discontinued services from Belagavi airport despite high passenger demand.

Raising the matter during Zero Hour in the Upper House, Kadadi pointed out that while Belagavi was supposed to be connected to 13 cities through five airlines under the Udaan-3 scheme, connectivity has now been reduced to just five cities, served by two airlines. “Airlines only provide services until they get viability gap funding or subsidy from the government. As soon as the subsidy expires, they stop flying,” he said. The MP highlighted that despite the end of the Udaan-3 scheme, passenger numbers remained robust. The airport recorded 3,40,300 passengers in 2024-25, marking a 9% increase over the previous year. Load factors



on routes to Mumbai, Delhi, Bangalore and Hyderabad ranged between 85% and 95%. “When flights were running at more than 90% capacity and were providing benefits even without a subsidy, it is wrong to stop service through airlines,” Kadadi said, questioning the decision to halt operations on profitable routes. Kadadi urged the government to restore flights from Mumbai, Pune, Chennai, Indore and Jaipur for the convenience of security personnel and the general public, emphasising that the high load factor justified continued operations. The central government is currently expanding the airport with a new terminal building worth Rs 262.64 crore and an apron costing Rs 25.98 crore, he said.

Biffes concludes: ‘Vanya’ gets Best Kannada Film award

Hamsalekha receives Lifetime Achievement Award

SHRADDHA A K BENGALURU, DHNS: The 17th edition of the Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFES) concluded on Friday night at Lulu Mall, wrapping up a vibrant celebration of cinema that brought together filmmakers, artistes and audiences from across India and abroad. The Japanese film *Lost Land*, the Marathi film *Sabar Bonda*, and the Kannada film *Vanya* won the Best Film awards in the Asian, Indian and Kannada categories, respectively, underscoring the festival’s commitment to diverse cinematic voices. Renowned lyricist and music director Hamsalekha was honoured with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the



Veteran Kannada music composer-lyricist Hamsalekha is felicitated with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the valedictory of the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival on Friday. Health Minister Dinesh Gundu Rao, actor-festival’s ambassador Prakash Raj, Chalanachitra Academy president Sadhu Kokila and Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce chairperson Jayamala are seen. DH PHOTO/PRASHANTH H G

Actor and the film festival’s brand ambassador Prakash Raj observed that languages may differ, but emotions remain universal. He described cinema as a language in human evolution that documents culture, pain and struggle. Reiterating a view he had expressed at the film festival’s opening ceremony, he said every language may be different, but at the heart of each lie human hopes, dreams and ambitions. These, he said, are translated through the language of cinema for everyone to understand. He noted that an international film festival serves as a platform for people from across the world to share their stories and perspectives. In such a space, he said, there is no right to accept some voices while rejecting others. Only by speaking up, he added, can the issues of a state or a country be brought to light. That responsibility, he said, often falls on filmmakers, directors, actors and other artistes. He added that honouring Hamsalekha lent deeper meaning to the festival’s celebrations.

Karnataka Chalanachitra Academy president Sadhu Kokila and artistic director Murali described this year’s line-up as high quality. A total of 249 films were screened, including 238 feature films and over 30 restored classics, with 44 competing in the Asian, Indian and Kannada sections. The festival recorded a footfall of one lakh across its three venues — Lulu Mall, Kalavidara Sangha, and Suchitra Film Society. Sadhu Kokila thanked the government and officials for their support and highlighted new initiatives, including an exhibition tracing 92 years of cinema history, tent cinema screenings, and special screenings of films starring actors Rajkumar and Vishnuvardhan. Karnataka Film Chamber of Commerce President Jayamala, Information and Public Relations Commissioner Hemant M Nimbalkar, Secretary B B Kaveri and Film Academy Registrar Vinod Chandra were among those present on the occasion.

Bengaluru-Kushalanagar highway to cut through Ranganathittu ESZ

CHIRANJEEVI KULKARNI BENGALURU, DHNS

The Bengaluru-Kushalanagar highway, an extended stretch of NH 275 that aims to bypass Mysuru, will cut through the eco-sensitive zone (ESZ) of the Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary, with the National Highway Authority of India (NHAI) having obtained clearance for the project. The National Board of Wildlife’s (NBWL) standing committee approved the proposal at its February 3 meeting after the chief wildlife warden, Karnataka, informed that the project was essential for enhancing road safety and reducing congestion. Though the 650m-stretch of the bypass highway is coming up in non-forest land and about 1km away from the boundary of the sanctuary’s core area, wild-



A file photo of Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary near Srirangapatna in Mandya district. The Zoological Survey of India, which conducted the field studies for the wildlife mitigation plan, has recorded 128 species of birds in the project area.

life officials have noted that it is passing through a fragile area. The Zoological Survey of India, which conducted the field studies for the wildlife mitigation plan, has recorded 128 species of birds in the project area. These include the endan-

gered birds like Egyptian Vulture, Black-bellied Tern and several birds on the near-threatened list of the International Union for Conservation of Nature. A faunal survey at the landscape level recorded 14 mammals, from elephants,

tigers and leopards to golden jackal and smooth-coated otter. Work paused Prabhugoud I B, who took over as the Mysore Wildlife Division’s Deputy Conservator of Forests, had in 2024 ordered the NHAI contractor to suspend the work after it was found that no clearances were received from the NBWL. The February 3 clearance from the NBWL directs the authorities to adopt a mitigation plan to reduce any impact on the wildlife. To a question, Prabhugoud said the final mitigation plan covers over 1 km additional stretch on both sides of the 650m stretch passing through the ESZ. “The measures include animal passages, no-man zone in areas passing over canals, a green belt of about 10m width, where three rows of trees will

act as natural noise and light barrier on a total of 3km stretch and comprehensive measures to prevent eateries in the area, installing signage for road users against throwing waste of stopping the vehicles in the area,” he said. Earlier, for over a year in 2019-2020, the NHAI had insisted that the road was not passing through the ESZ. Following media reports over the concerns, forest officers had in 2019 had asked the NHAI for clarification on the matter. The ESZ monitoring committee noted that the National Highway Authority in its report dated 18.08.2020, stated that NH-275 was “not passing through the ESZ” of the Ranganathittu Bird Sanctuary. After a detailed discussion with the special land acquisition officer, the NHAI authorities admitted that the road was passing close

to the border of the ESZ. “But on detailed verification of the boundary of the ESZ as per the boundary description mentioned in the Gazette notification, it was found that the proposed NH 275 was passing through the ESZ,” the minutes of the meeting of the monitoring committee noted, adding that the NHAI was directed to drop the project. NHAI convinced the authorities by stating that the bypass project was necessary in view of the heavy traffic and the difficulty in making the highway four-lane in the city limit. The authority had commenced the work after getting clearance from the monitoring committee. Officials were told to suspend the work till they get clearance from the NBWL.

At Int’l Agri Trade Fair, minister tells farmers to be entrepreneurs

BENGALURU, DHNS : Agriculture Minister N Chaluvarayaswamy on Friday urged farmers to transition from traditional growers to become entrepreneurs. Speaking at the International Agricultural Trade Fair 2026 at the Palace Grounds, the minister unveiled a roadmap to link the farmlands with global markets and urban consumers. The three-day fair, themed ‘Agriculture Beyond Production’, serves as a bridge between farmers, financial institutions, and international buyers. Highlighting the government’s push for value addition, Chaluvarayaswamy noted that record production alone is insufficient if it does not translate into financial security. “Farmers must not only secure consistent returns but also become job creators. Our goal is to see them thrive as entrepreneurs, even within urban landscapes,” the minister said, addressing a gathering of farm-

ers from 25 districts. Providing details about the state government’s interventions over the last two years, the minister revealed that over Rs 6,000 crore in insurance claims have been settled. To tackle the perennial labour shortage, the government has distributed farm machinery worth Rs 1,500 crore and established 450 High-Tech Harvest Hubs, he added. Emphasis has been laid on inclusive growth, with the minister highlighting special subsidies of Rs 50 lakh for SC/ST farmers to encourage high-tech mechanisation. The fair features a diverse array of innovations, with a particular focus on millets and organic produce. By facilitating direct interactions with banks and exporters, the state government aims to eliminate middlemen, potentially boosting farmer incomes four fold through better branding and packaging.

4 of a family from Gubbi found hanging at Bihar’s dharmashala

NALANDA (BIHAR), PTI: Four tourists, including three women from Karnataka were found hanging in their room at a Dharmashala in Bihar’s Nalanda district on Friday, a police official said. The available documents suggest that the victims were members of a family — an elderly woman, her son and two daughters. The incident occurred in Rajgir town, a major pilgrimage site for both Buddhists and Jains. As a foul smell was emanating from their room, which was booked in the name of GR Naga Prasad, the police broke open the door and found the four tourists dead. The deceased have been identified as G R Suman-gala (78), her daughters Shilpa

G R (48) and Shrutha G B (43), and son G R Naga Prasad (50), all residents of Gubbi in Tumakuru district. According to a statement issued by the district police, a large quantity of sleeping pills — 25 strips — was also recovered from the belongings of the deceased. The police also found Aadhaar cards, PAN cards, ATM cards, other documents, cash amounting to Rs 1.18,000, and personal belongings of the deceased. “Karnataka Police were contacted and, with the assistance of Gubbi (Rural) Police Station, their family members were informed,” a police official said. All bodies have been sent for post-mortem examination, police said.



ಕೇಂದ್ರೀಯ ವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ ಭಾ.ವಿ.ಸಂ. ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು - 560012

KENDRIYA VIDYALAYA INDIAN INSTITUTE OF SCIENCE

BENGALURU - 560012

Email- principal.kvisc@gmail.com, Website: <https://iiscbangalore.kvs.ac.in>, Ph: 080-23371316

Walk-in-Interview for Teachers

A Walk-in-Interview will be conducted on **09.02.2026 (Monday)** from 8.30 a.m to 11.30 a.m. for the following posts on contractual basis-

1. PGTs (English, Hindi, Physics, Chemistry, Maths, Biology, Computer Science)

2. TGTs (English, Hindi, Sanskrit, Science, Maths, Social Science)

3. Primary Teachers

4. Sports Coach

5. Computer Instructor

6. Kannada Language Teacher

7. Special Educator

8. Educational Counsellor

9. Staff Nurse

10. Yoga Instructor

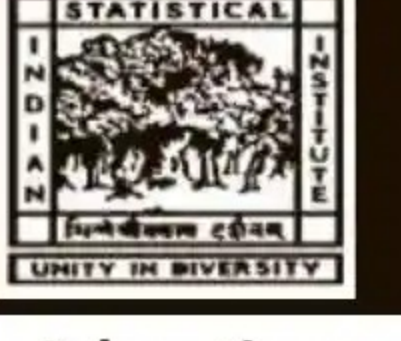
11. ATL Instructor

NOTE :

Details of eligibility, educational qualification, remuneration and Interview Date and Time are put up in the School Website: <https://iiscbangalore.kvs.ac.in>. Interested eligible candidates report to Vidyalaya as per schedule given in the website along with duly filled Biodata form with all original documents / certificates and one set of self-attested xerox copies of all documents.

No TA/DA will be paid for attending Interview.

PRINCIPAL



INDIAN STATISTICAL INSTITUTE

8th Mile Mysore Road, R.V College Post, Bengaluru - 560059

Advertisement No. REC-01/2026-1, KOL Date: 22.01.2026

Applications are invited from dynamic result oriented candidates for direct recruitment to following vacant posts:

1) ASSOCIATE SCIENTIST 'A' (Computer Science)

2) * SECTION OFFICER (ACCOUNTS)

3) * SECTION OFFICER (GENERAL)

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5) ASSISTANT (LABORATORY) 'A'

6) CARPENTER 'A'

7) ELECTRICIAN 'A'

8) DRIVER 'A'

9) ASSISTANT (LIBRARY) 'A'

10) OPERATOR-CUM-MECHANIC (LIFT) 'A'

11) COOK 'A'.

For more details please visit:

<https://www.isical.ac.in/jobs> (OR) <https://www.isibang.ac.in>

Initial Place of Posting: Indian Statistical Institute, Bengaluru Centre.

Filled in applications, in the prescribed format, along with the self-attested copies of certificates in support of age, educational qualifications, experience, caste, disability certificate, etc., should be sent to reach to the **Chief Executive (A&F), Indian Statistical Institute, 203, B. T. Road, Kolkata - 700108** through SPEED POST/REGISTERED POST within 30 days from the date of publication of advertisement in Employment News.

*** Under Review**

Chief Executive (Admin & Finance)

Israeli woman
gang-rape case:
Gangavathi
court convicts
three

GANGAVATHI (KOPPAL DISTRICT), DHNS: The First Additional District and Sessions Court on Friday convicted three accused of gang-raping an Israeli tourist and a homestay operator on the banks of Tungabhadra Left Bank canal near Sanapur lake last March. The court to pronounce the sentence on February 16.

The incident had triggered public outcry and drawn international media attention.

The court convicted Mallesh (Handimalla), Sharanappa and Sai, residents of Sainagar in Gangavathi in the gangrape case.

The trio had approached the two survivors, who were with three other friends near Sanapur, and sought money from them. When the tourists refused to give them the money, they attacked the group. They pushed three men into the canal and sexually assaulted the Israeli tourist and the homestay operator.

Two men managed to swim to safety while a tourist from Odisha drowned in the canal.

Minister warns private bus operators of licence cancellation

Told to comply with regulations by month-end

AMULLYA SHIVASHANKAR
BENGALURU, DHNS

Despite multiple bus accidents in the state, private travel agencies have yet to become vigilant. They continue to operate without a uniform shift system, often relying on overworked drivers.

On Friday, a bus travelling from Bengaluru to Tumakuru caught fire near Nelamangala after the driver fell asleep at the wheel. The vehicle struck an electricity pole, sparking the blaze. Fortunately, all passengers escaped unhurt. However, the accident has raised serious concerns regarding the safety and physical health of drivers, especially since the driver fell asleep during a journey of only two hours.

When *DH* spoke to drivers from various private companies, many admitted to taking on extra shifts to supplement their income.

Nagesh Kumar, a driver for a

well-known agency, explained: “We pick up extra shifts because we aren’t paid enough. We get tired, but we do it just to afford basic necessities.”

Krishna Murthy, another driver, discussed the lack of consistent rest: “We are given one day off a week, but depending on the travel schedule, we sometimes work ten days at a stretch.”

He added that many have become accustomed to working with only a few hours of sleep.

An anonymous driver noted that a lack of new recruits has left the industry with an ageing workforce. “Most drivers here are older and cannot handle as much physical stress, which increases the likelihood of accidents,” he said.

Responding to the incident, Transport Minister Ramalinga Reddy told *DH* that “We have given all private operators until the end of February to abide by the rules. After that, we will strictly begin cancelling the li-



The charred remains of the private bus which caught fire after hitting road divider near Nelamangala of Bengaluru Rural district in the early hours of Friday.

Close shave for 30 passengers as bus catches fire near Nelamangala

Thirty passengers had a miraculous escape early Friday morning after their private tourist bus crashed into a ditch and burst into flames near Nelamangala on the Bengaluru-Tumakuru highway.

The incident occurred around 1.30 am near Budihal Gate. According to the police, the driver of the Prajwal Travels bus reportedly fell asleep at the wheel, causing the vehicle to veer off the road and climb the divider.

As the bus moved

onto the divider, it came into contact with a live electric wire. The contact triggered a spark that quickly ignited the vehicle. Fortunately, all 30 passengers managed to evacuate the bus safely before the flames spread.

Nelamangala traffic police and fire department officials arrived at the scene shortly after to douse the fire, though the bus was completely gutted. A case has been registered at the Nelamangala traffic police station.

Safety measures mooted

- Removal of obstructions: All driver partition doors and sliders on sleeper berths must be removed to ensure easy exit.
- Fire safety: Every bus must carry a minimum 10kg fire extinguisher (checked and in the green zone).
- Strict registration: All bus registrations must be carried out using Form 22 and 22A only with approval from an authorised agency.
- Documentation: Every registration must include a layout drawing detailing dimensions, door locations, emergency exits, and roof hatches.

censes of those who flout them. For state-run buses, we already enforce strict working hours.”

The minister also noted that the Union Government needs to implement stricter nationwide regulations for private operators.

Ulsoor Lake to get Rs 100-crore facelift, to model Sankey Tank

Ulsoor Lake, from Page 1

“Because of the heavy silt accumulation, water storage capacity has drastically reduced and bunds have weakened. If we do not act now, there is a risk of breach,” he said, adding the lake is being desilted for the first time in the last 30-40 years.

Ulsoor Lake—spread across 106 acres and dotted with six serene islands—is the only waterbody in the city’s central business district area.

A major public-facing component of the project is the creation of a double walkway around the lake.

“The current walkway is too narrow. Walkers and runners struggle to share space. We are



The walkway works at the Ulsoor Lake, in Bengaluru, on Friday. DH PHOTO/B K JANARDHAN

creating a wider, double-layered walkway to accommodate

both,” Arshad said. The Karnataka Tank De-

velopment and Conservation Authority (KTDC), which has approved the project, had directed officials to drop the plans for a circular staircase and basketball court as they amounted to construction activity.

The project also proposes an open gym, dedicated children’s play area, library space and seating zones.

“This will not just be lake beautification. It will become a space for the whole community,” a senior corporation official said.

The total project cost is estimated at Rs 100 crore. Of this, Rs 30 crore will come from the minor irrigation department, Rs 50 crore from the civic body and Rs 20 crore from the state

government.

Arshad said works worth approximately Rs 40 crore have commenced. “The design is ready, the estimates are ready and the bund creation work has begun. It has taken nearly a year of planning and significant efforts to secure the funds,” he said.

Flow of sewage to the lake, however, remains a concern. At the moment, sewage flows into the lake from three inlets, walkers pointed out, complaining about the foul smell.

“Even after construction of the sewage treatment plant, the flow has not stopped,” they noted. Officials promised the sewage flow will be stopped before the rejuvenation work is over.

RBI to compensate customers for fraudulent transactions

RBI, from Page 1

“We will also publish a discussion paper on possible measures to enhance the safety of digital payments. Such measures may include lagged credits and additional authentication for specific classes of users like senior citizens,” Malhotra added.

Development and regulatory policies have focused on reforming the current practice on cross-selling, methods of loan recovery using agents and framework for compensation in case of small value fraudulent transactions, SBI Group Chief Economic Advisor Soumya Kanti Ghosh said in a note.

“A Discussion Paper to curb frauds in digital payment will be exploring the introduction of calibrated safeguards in digital payments such as introduction of lagged credits,” he noted.

The number of banking frauds increased from 13,494 in 2022-23 to 23,879 in the financial year ended March 2025.

Cyber command raids mule account...

Cyber crime, from Page 1

Some popular modus operandi include digital arrest and investment scam, otherwise known as pig butchering.

These mule accounts help scammers layer the crime proceeds, launder them and in some cases, the money is physically withdrawn or converted to crypto currency and handed over to kingpins outside the country.

The raids on such a large scale were launched for the first time since the state government constituted the Cyber Command Centre (CCC) last year. It is headed by director general of police (DGP) Pronab Mohanty.

“So far, the raids were limited to only specific cybercrime cases. This time, it is aimed

at targeting mule account holders and dismantling the whole network. These herders are behind this large network. They are aggregators of mule accounts: they create mule accounts, hoard them or keep them with themselves and either sell them or rent them out to cybercriminals and as when required for a fee or a commission. The cybercriminals contact these herders and based on their requirement, purchase or rent the mule accounts,” a well-placed source told *DH*.

Investigations have revealed these mule accounts are advertised extensively on Telegram social media and instant messaging service. Once the contact is initiated, the accounts are exchanged based on the agreed upon sum.

“These suspects lure gull-

ible people and use their KYC details to open the bank accounts to be used as mules. In some cases, it has been found that some have voluntarily given their accounts to be used as mules for a fee ranging between Rs 10,000 and Rs 20,000,” a senior source said.

Through sustained investigations, the network and herders were identified and raids were launched. “The raids were based on the modus operandi of the herders identified during the course of the investigation. The profiles of the arrested suspects are yet to be determined and it is part of the investigation,” the sources said.

Senior sources added that this will be a sustained effort with continuous raids to dismantle the networks.



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Department of Health & Family Welfare
Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society
Arogya Soudha, 4th Floor, 1st Cross, Magadi Road, Bengaluru-560023.
Tel: 080-29557021, email: pdksaps@gmail.com

No.KSAPS/DD (STD)/05/2025-26

Dated: 06.02.2026

Invitation for Tender (Two Cover) (Call-2) through e-Procurement

Tender (Two Cover) (Call-2) are invited for supply of STI Color Coded Kit-1 & Kit-6 under E-Procurement System. Details are available at e-procurement website: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>. Last date for submission of tender on **21/02/2026 at 5.30pm.**

Sd/- Project Director

Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, Bengaluru

DIPR/CP/5479/NR/2025-26

Karnataka State AIDS Prevention Society, Bengaluru



HUBLI ELECTRICITY SUPPLY COMPANY LIMITED
(Wholly owned Government of Karnataka undertaking)
Company Office, Navanagar, Hubballi - 580025. Telephone No: 0836-2223323
E-Mail ID : seecivil@hescom.co.in Website: hescom.karnataka.gov.in CIN : U31401KA2002SGC030437

No: HESCOM/SE(C)/IAEEC/AEC/F-51/2025-26/CYS-10711

Dated: 06-02-2026

NOTIFICATION FOR INVITATION OF TENDERS
(Through Karnataka Public Procurement Portal Only)

Superintending Engineer (Civil), Corporate Office, HESCOM, Hubballi invites tender for the work of Providing Wall Panelling, Wooden Flooring and Furnitures to the SCADA Room at the Newly Constructed Corporate Office Gopanakoppa, Hubballi. The details of works are as follows.

Sl.No.	Name of the Work	Indent No.	Amount Put to Tender (Rs. in Lakhs)	Completion Period	Category
1	Providing Wall Panelling, Wooden Flooring and Furnitures to the SCADA Room at the Newly Constructed Corporate Office Gopanakoppa, Hubballi	973	19.36	1 Month	General

The detailed notification regarding the bid enquiry can be obtained by logging on to the Website: <https://www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in> on or after 07-02-2026. For further information, please contact Telephone No: 0836-2223323 during office hours.

Sd/- Superintending Engineer (Civil),

Corporate Office, HESCOM, Hubballi.

DIPR/Dhanwad/1204/Adverto/2025-26

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಸರ್ಕಾರ

ಲೋಕೋಪಯೋಗಿ, ಇಲಾಖೆ ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ಕಾರ್ಯಪಾಲಕ ಇಂಜಿನಿಯರರವರ ಕಛೇರಿ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ

ಸಂ: 18/2025-2026

ದಿನಾಂಕ: 06.02.2026

ಮಂಡ್ಯ ಜಿಲ್ಲೆಯ ಪದ್ಮದ್ವಾರ ತಾಲ್ಲೂಕಿನ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ಅಲ್ಲಾವು ಚಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಐಟಿಎಂಎಂ ದರದ ಬೆಂಚರಗಳ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಾಗಿ ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರಿಂದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ **KW-3** ರ ರೀತಿ ದ್ವಿಲೋಕೀ ಪದ್ಧತಿಯಲ್ಲಿ ಆಹ್ವಾನಿಸಲಾಗಿದೆ. ಅರ್ಹ ಗುತ್ತಿಗೆದಾರರು ಇ-ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಯ ಬೆಂಚರಗಾಗಿ ಭಾಗವಹಿಸಬಹುದು.

ಬೆಂಚರ್ ದಾಖಲಾತಿಗಳನ್ನು ದಿನಾಂಕ: **07.02.2026** ರಿಂದ ಇ-ಪ್ರೋಕ್ಯೂರ್ಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮೂಲಕ ದಾಖಲಾತಿ ಮಾಡಿಕೊಳ್ಳಬಹುದಾಗಿದೆ. ಬೆಂಚರ್ ವಿಚಾರಣೆ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **13.02.2026** ಸಂಜೆ 4.00 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಸಲ್ಲಿಸಲು ಕೊನೆಯ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **16.02.2026** ಸಂಜೆ 4.30 ಘಂಟೆವರೆಗೆ, ತಾಂತ್ರಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **17.02.2026** ಸಂಜೆ 4.31 ಘಂಟೆ ನಂತರ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು, ಆರ್ಥಿಕ ಬಿಡ್ ತೆರೆಯುವ ದಿನಾಂಕ: **18.02.2026** ಬೆಳಿಗ್ಗೆ 11.00 ಗಂಟೆಗೆ ಅಥವಾ ನಂತರದ ಕೆಲಸದ ದಿನಗಳು. ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆ ಬೆಲೆ ಇ-ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ. ಕಾಲಮಿತೆ: ಮಳೆಗಾಲ ಸೇರಿ 3 ತಿಂಗಳು ಒಟ್ಟು 1 (ಒಂದು) ಕಾಮಗಾರಿಗಳ ಪೈಕಿ ಗರಿಷ್ಠ ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.100.00 ಲಕ್ಷಗಳು ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಬೆಲೆ ಇ-ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್‌ರಂತೆ, ಕೆಲಸಗಳ ವಿವರ, ಅಂದಾಜು ಮೊತ್ತ, ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ., ಮೊತ್ತ ಮುಂತಾದ ಮಾಹಿತಿಗಳನ್ನು ಸದರಿ ಕಛೇರಿಯಿಂದ ಕಛೇರಿ ವೇಳೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಪಡೆಯಬಹುದು.

ಟಿಪ್ಪಣಿ: 1. ಈ ಕೆಳಗೆ ಸಹಿ ಮಾಡಿರುವವರು ಯಾವುದೇ ಕಾರಣಗಳನ್ನು ನೀಡದೆ ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯ ಮುಂದೂಡುವಿಕೆ /ಸಂಪೂರ್ಣವಾಗಿ ಬೆಂಚರ್ ರದ್ದುಗೊಳಿಸುವ/ಬೆಂಚರ್ ನಿಲಾಕರಿಸುವ ಹಕ್ಕನ್ನು ಹೊಂದಿರುತ್ತಾರೆ.

2. ಇನ್ನು ಮುಂದೆ ಬೆಂಚರ್ ಪ್ರಕ್ರಿಯೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಯಾವುದೇ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳು ಇದ್ದಲ್ಲಿ ದಿನ ಪತ್ರಿಕೆಗಳಲ್ಲಿ ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದಿಲ್ಲ, ಬದಲಾಗಿ ವಿದ್ಯುನ್ಮಾನ ಸಂಗ್ರಹಣೆ ವೇದಿಕೆಯಲ್ಲಿ ಮಾತ್ರ ಬದಲಾವಣೆಗಳನ್ನು ಪ್ರಕಟಿಸಲಾಗುವುದು.

ಸಹಿ/-

ಕಾ.ಇಂ.ಲೋ.ಇ.ವಿಭಾಗ, ಮಂಡ್ಯ



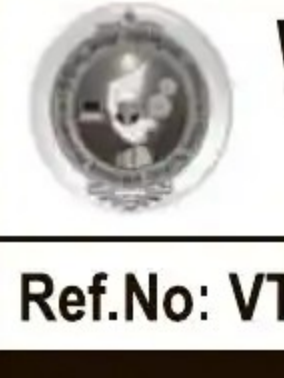
GOVERNMENT OF INDIA, DEPARTMENT OF SPACE
U.R. RAO SATELLITE CENTRE
CONSTRUCTION & MAINTENANCE GROUP
HAL Old Airport Road, Bangalore - 560 017
(Phone: 080 25084156, 4184)
CORRIGENDUM - I

Sl.No	Description	Details
1	Name of work	Modification to Audio & Video Studio at Main Building, Main Campus, URSC – Civil Work including Acoustic & Lighting Design.
2	E-Tender Notice No.	URSC/C&MG/CM/34/2025-26 dated: 16/01/2026
3	Estimated cost put to tender	₹ 13.28 Lakhs
4	Period during which the tender document can be downloaded.	Extended upto 16.30 hrs on 17/02/2026
5	Last date and time for receipt of tenders	Up to 14.30 hrs. on 20/02/2026
6	Due date and time of opening of tenders	After 14.31 hrs on 20/02/2026

Interested tenderers may please refer Detailed Notice Inviting E-Tender (NIET) for eligibility criteria and other details along with Hindi version in website: www.isro.gov.in and download the tender documents from www.tenderwizard.com/ISRO.

Sd/-

Group Director, C&MG



VISVESVARAYA TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY
“Jnana Sangama”, Belagavi - 590018, Karnataka

Ref.No: VTU/BGM/SAP/CW/141/T-735/2025-26/5784

Date: 06-02-2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION

The Registrar, VTU, Belagavi invites (Two Cover Systems) e-Tenders for the following work through e-Procurement Tendering Mode. **Name of Work: Tender for Procurement of Equipment for Establishment of AICTE Idea Lab at Dept. of Mechanical Engineering, UBDTCE, Davangere.** Amount Put to Tender: **Rs. 59,84,000/-**, EMD Amount: **Rs. 90,000/-**. Last Date for Receipt of Tender: **25-02-2026 upto 2.30 PM**. Date of Opening of Tender: **26-02-2026 at 4.00 PM**. The details regarding participation in the e-Tendering can be accessed by logging to our VTU Website: www.vtu.ac.in and e-Procurement Portal Website: www.kppp.karnataka.gov.in

Sd/-

Registrar

DIPR/Belagavi/1781/Adverto/2025-26

GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
(Public Works Department)

**Office of the Executive Engineer,
Public Works Department, Division: Yadgir.**

GSTIN:29BLR002252F1DR

No.EE/PWD/Divn/YDG/TS-1&3/e-Tender/2025-26/2843,

Dated:06.02.2026

Short Term e-Tender Notification

1) Details of works: On behalf of Governor of Karnataka as per KTPP Amendment 1999-2000 Act 2000 Standard Bid Document KW-2,3 & 4 Karnataka Public Works Department invited item Rate Tender under KPPP Portal in Two Cover System from Eligible Agency/Contractors for following works Under 5054 KRDC and 5054 Appendix-E (Plan) for the year 2025-26 Under Yadgir Taluka-(1)30351 and Shorapur Taluka-(1)32928, (2)32241, (3)32300, (4)32243, (5)32244 & (6)26540/CALL-3 Total 7 (Seven) works Tender Called 2) Amount Put to Tender: Minimum Rs 15.00 Lakhs and Maximum Rs.500.00 Lakhs 3) Contractor Eligible Details: Civil Class-IV & Above 4) Tender Processing Fee and EMD Details: Tender Fee, EMD & Period as per kppp portal, 5) Last Date & Time for Tender Pre-Bid Meeting: 20.02.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards)(For KW-4 Works Only) 6) Last Date & Time for Tender queries/Clarification: 23.02.2026 (Upto 17.30 hrs) 7) Last Date & Time for Receipt of the tender in e-KPPP portal: 24.02.2026 (Upto 16.00 hrs) 8) Date & Time of Opening of the Tender/Technical Bid: 25.02.2026 (16.30 hrs Onwards) 9) Date & Time of Opening of the Financial Bid: 27.02.2026 (11.30 hrs Onwards) 10) For More Details Contact: Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Division : Yadgir. 11)Website Address: <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in>

NOTE: Any Corrections / Changes will be updated in the kppp Portal only

Sd/- Executive Engineer,

PWD Division, Yadgir.

DIP/YDG/515/KSMC&A/2025-26

HC seeks details of action against illegal immigrants

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Karnataka high court has directed the state government to furnish details of steps taken to clear illegal immigrants from Bengaluru city. Justice M Nagaprasanna gave this direction while hearing the petition filed by activist Puneet Kerehalli challenging two cases registered against him by Soladevanahalli police.

The FIRs were registered against Puneet Kerehalli after he and his associates reportedly uploaded videos on social media giving false statements, against state DG and IGP. They had visited a settlement in Kempapura in north Bengaluru, and claimed that Bangladeshi nationals had taken shelter there.

The court directed the police not to take any coercive steps against the petitioner, till the next date of hearing. "Additional Special Public Prosecutor shall also place on record, as to what are the steps taken towards the clearing of illegal immigrants in the city, which even according to the state, is close to 20 lakhs," Justice Nagaprasanna said.

CJ Roy death: SIT continues probe, scours financials

BENGALURU, DHNS: The Special Investigation Team (SIT) is continuing its investigation into the death by suicide of real estate mogul C J Roy and are looking into his financials.



C J Roy

Well-placed sources said that investigators are scouring in detail Roy's financials and accounts to get a scope of his businesses. They have also got the details from his Chartered Accountants (CAs), the sources said. "The investigators are yet to conclude why Roy killed himself. This is a challenging investigation since there wasn't any clear note or letter from the deceased describing why he took the extreme step," the sources said.

Sources also said that they have so far obtained around three months of Call Detail Records (CDRs) of Roy.

"Roy was in contact with several individuals frequently. Many of his calls were also made over the internet, through WhatsApp," the sources said.

The sources also said that the SIT may send a team to Dubai, where Roy had a part of his business. Further investigation is underway.

BJP will fight polls alongside JD(S): Yediyurappa

TUMAKURU, DHNS: The BJP will fight the next Assembly election alongside the JD(S), confirmed former chief minister and BJP Parliamentary Board member B S Yediyurappa in Tumakuru on Friday.

"Both former prime minister H D Deve Gowda and Union Minister H D Kumaraswamy have shared their thoughts on the future of the alliance in New Delhi," said Yediyurappa.

The people of the state are desperate for a change, said the BJP veteran. "The BJP-JD(S) alliance will win the next Assembly election and form the government," Yediyurappa added. Demanding a rollback of the hike in Namma Metro fares, Yediyurappa said, "People are struggling to cope with rising prices of various other commodities. Increasing the Metro fare under these circumstances is unacceptable."

‘Unlike ruling Cong, BJP paid for rural job scheme ads’

Ashoka alleges Siddu govt of using taxpayers money for political ads

BENGALURU, DHNS

Leader of the Opposition R Ashoka on Friday defended the BJP's VB G-RAM G advertisement published in newspapers, stating that the party had borne the entire cost and that no public funds were used.

"The BJP paid for the advertisement from party funds. Not a single rupee has come from the Central government. But, the Siddaramaiah government in Karnataka is using taxpayers' money for political advertisements," alleged Ashoka, during a press meet in Ben-

galuru. "Gandhiji is holding a stick because he is outraged by Congress' misdemeanor and misuse of his name. Gandhiji stood for ahimsa and called for prohibition and stopping cow slaughter. He even asked for the Congress to be dissolved after Independence. Did they implement any of these?" he asked.



Ashoka

Stating the Congress had no moral right to talk about Gandhi, Ashoka said, "In the name of Gandhi, the country saw the Emergency and Bofors scam. All the central and state schemes should have been named after Gandhi or Ambedkar. But 470 schemes, buildings, airports and roads are named after Nehru, Indira and Rajiv Gandhi," he said.

Ashoka asked the Congress to introspect over their electoral setbacks. "Congress is a dead party that lacks leadership. Give up dynasty rule. Mallikar-

jun Kharge is only a namesake leader, Rahul is the LOP, Priyanka, the general secretary, and Sonia Gandhi is in the Congress Working Committee. The Gandhi family has spoiled the party," claimed Ashoka.

Dismissing Congress' demand for ballot papers, Ashok said, "Rajiv Gandhi brought in EVMs. Now Congress has lost faith even in Rajiv Gandhi. People have accepted EVMs and courts have upheld them. Congress behaves like Tughlaq. The Election Commission conducts elections, not the BJP."

Ashoka informed that the party's GBA poll in-charge would hold meetings with MLAs, defeated candidates and office-bearers. "The government is fleeing Bengalureans through multiple taxes. We will win all five corporations. People will vote them out," he asserted.

Congress accuses BJP of misusing Gandhi's image to promote violence

MLC Ramesh Babu files plaint seeking criminal action

BENGALURU, DHNS

Congress MLC Ramesh Babu on Friday lodged a formal complaint with the additional chief secretary (Home) and the DGP Karnataka, seeking criminal action against Karnataka BJP over the alleged misuse of Mahatma Gandhi's photograph in a "violence-promoting" advertisement published in several newspapers.

In his complaint, dated February 6, Babu alleged that an advertisement published in newspapers carried imagery that "promotes, glorifies or incites violence" by misusing the image of Mahatma Gandhi - the Father of the Nation and a global symbol of non-violence.

Babu alleged Karnataka BJP, distorted Gandhi's legacy, hurt public sentiments and had the potential to disturb public order and communal harmony.

Calling it an "illegal and punishable" act, Babu said it attracted cognizable offences under the Bharatiya Nyaya Sanhita (BNS), 2023 - Section 196 (promoting enmity and acts prejudicial to harmony), Section 197 (representations prejudicial to national integration), Section 299 (deliberate and malicious acts intended to outrage public feelings), Section 353 (statements conducing to public mischief) and Section 356 (defamation of a revered national personality) and also provisions under the Information Technology Act, 2000, as the content had been

World knows BJP's respect for Gandhiji: Home Minister

Ridiculing the advertisements inserted by the BJP in response to the state government's campaign against the VB-G-RAM G Bill, Home Minister G Parameshwara on Friday said, "The whole world is aware of the respect the BJP has for Mahatma Gandhi," reports DHNS from Chikkamagaluru.

The Home Minister argued that the BJP had replaced the MGNREGA with a new scheme owing to Gandhiji's enduring association with the

Congress. "The Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Scheme was the world's largest initiative in terms of generating employment. The scheme's empowering role has been acknowledged by several international organisations, including the World Bank. The BJP cannot stomach the scheme's success, and is now resorting to misleading advertisements," said Parameshwara.

circulated on electronic and digital platforms.

It also violates the Emblems and Names (Prevention of Improper Use) Act, 1950, due to the unauthorised use of Mahatma Gandhi's image, he alleged.

Babu urged the police to register an FIR, conduct a thorough investigation, initiate strict legal action against those responsible while taking preventive steps to stop further circulation of the advertisement.

Rural Development and Panchayat Raj Minister Priyank Kharge said, "Gandhi was assassinated by Godse and now his followers are assassinating Gandhism. Gandhi never raised the stick in his hand to attack anyone. Gandhi never showed the path of falsehood. Yet, organisations like RSS and BJP failed to understand the greatness of Mahatma Gandhi and have insulted him by portraying him as a proponent of violence."

Congress MLC B K Hariprasad said, the cruel mindset that killed Mahatma Gandhi,

who breathed truth, non-violence and tolerance, continues even today. "The Sangh Parivar and BJP, who built their politics around cruelty, murder, violence, oppression and hooliganism, have insulted Gandhi's principle of non-violence by releasing an advertisement depicting Gandhi hitting Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, LOP Rahul Gandhi, and AICC president Mallikarjun Kharge with a stick. The lathi used by RSS is a symbol of violence, the walking stick used by Gandhi was a symbol of strength, hard work and determination."

Hariprasad also slammed the media organisations that published the advertisement and said, "The media should have refused to carry such a derogatory advertisement about the Father of the Nation and upheld journalistic ethics. The state newspapers too should not become part of the "Godi media." One must not forget history - Babu was one of the most ideal journalists this country has ever known."

Yathindra says CM will continue; DKS: Yathindra our high command

MYSYRU/MANGALURU, DHNS

The power tussle in the state's Congress continued on Friday, with MLC Yathindra Siddaramaiah saying his father Siddaramaiah would continue as the chief minister for the entire five-year term, drawing a sharp reaction from Deputy Chief Minister D K Shivakumar.

"The Congress high command has given a clear signal in this regard, although they have not mentioned it anywhere. The high command has not responded to calls for leadership change from some quarters. Hence, I feel my father will continue to be the

CM for the rest of the term," Yathindra told reporters in Mysuru.

In a sarcastic reply to Yathindra's statement, Shivakumar said in Mangaluru, "Yathindra is our high command. Whatever he says, I will accept with respect. Let us accept him as the high command when he issues statements like a high command."

8 10 Asked about MLA Shivaganga Basavaraj's statement seeking clarity on the power-sharing agreement, Shivakumar said, "I will not respond to statements of Basavaraju or Yathindra. If any response is to be given, it should come from the high



DCM D K Shivakumar



Yathindra Siddaramaiah

command in Delhi," he told reporters.

On the court for elected representatives accepting the Lokayukta police B report in the MUDA case, related to his family, Yathindra said, "I have always said that the allegations were false. Those allegations were politically motivated. Now, the truth has prevailed."

Citizens must uphold constitutional values: KU Vice-Chancellor



A large number of students, academicians, and general public participate in the walkathon organised as part of 'Constitution is Light' event in Dharwad on Friday. DH PHOTO

DHARWAD, DHNS

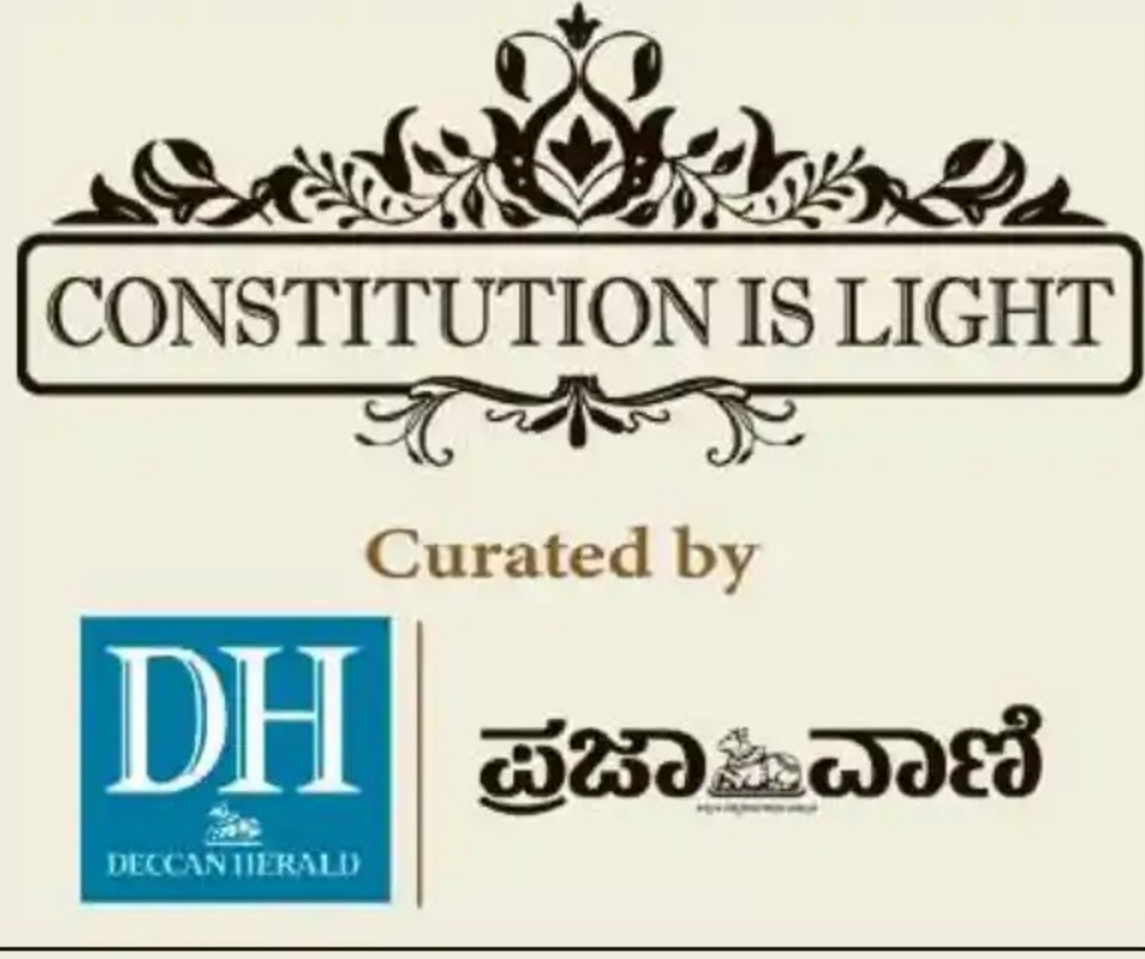
Constitution of India is the most important document guiding the functioning of the country and it is the responsibility of every citizen to understand and practice the values enshrined in it, said Karnatak University Vice-Chancellor A M Khan.

He was speaking after inaugurating a walkathon and seminar organised as part of the programme 'Constitution is Light - Step Forward with Dharwad-Hubballi', hosted by Deccan Herald and Prajavani in association with the Social Welfare Department on the Karnatak University campus on Friday.

Prof Khan described the Constitution as the most sacred document prepared by "We, the People" and accepted by them. He said that the Constitution not only guarantees rights to citizens but also emphasises their duties as responsible members of society.

"Rights and duties must go hand-in-hand to realise the aspirations of the Constitution," he said, adding that every student should make it a habit to read at least one page of the Constitution every week to understand its essence.

Speaking on the occasion, KU Registrar (Evaluation) N Y Mattihal observed that even after 75 years of adopting the Constitution, the goal of equality has not been achieved to the expected level.



"The Constitution promotes humanity, brotherhood and truth. However, many people are still unaware of its values. It has become essential to sensitise society about the principles enshrined in the Constitution," he said.

Delivering the special address, thinker and former chairman of Gandhian Studies Centre Shivanand Shettar said that soon after independence India faced several challenges such as poverty, unemployment, lack of opportunities and agricultural distress. Constitution has served as a comprehensive framework to address these issues and has been a guiding force for society.

He emphasised that the fundamental rights guaranteed by the Constitution cannot be taken away and continue to guide the nation. "Despite divisions based on caste and religion, the Constitution treats everyone equally. No individual is inferior or superior," he said.

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For the Educational, Social & Economic Upliftment of Scheduled Castes

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◆ WEATHER ◆

Overview: Dry weather prevailed over Coastal Karnataka, South Interior Karnataka and North Interior Karnataka

Forecast Feb 07: Dry weather likely to prevail over the state.

INTERIOR NORTH				
Stations	Max	Min	Rain	
Belagavi	30	16.8	00	
Bidar	28.2	14.2	00	
Vijayapura	30	14.8	00	
Dharwad	30	13.2	00	
Haveri	31	15.4	00	
Kalaburagi	32.6	19.5	00	
Raichur	30	16	00	
COASTAL				
Honnavar	36.8	19.7	00	
Karwar	37.4	21.6	00	
Shirali	NA	NA	NA	
Mangaluru	34.2	21.1	00	

INTERIOR SOUTH			
Stations	Max	Min	Rain
Agumbe	NA	NA	NA
Bengaluru	29.8	16	00
Ballari	NA	NA	NA
Chamarajanagar	NA	NA	NA
Chikkamagaluru	NA	NA	NA
Chitradurga	29.5	15	00
Davangere	30.5	14.5	00
Hassan	31.3	13	00
Mysuru	31.4	17	00
Madikeri	NA	NA	NA
Kolar	29.6	9.2	00
OTHER STATIONS			
New Delhi	23.9	9.1	00
Kolkata	28	16.3	00
Mumbai	35.1	20.4	00
Chennai	31.1	21.8	00
Pune	31.3	13.8	00
Hyderabad	29	17.5	00
Thirupuram	34.7	24	00

Forest watcher ends life in Bhalki

► **BHALKI (BIDAR DISTRICT), DHNS:** A forest watcher was found hanging at his quarters near the office of the department in the town on Friday. The deceased has been identified as Ankush Sudhama (57), a native of Bolegaon in the taluk.

The police have suspected to be a case of suicide.

Meanwhile, former Union minister Bhagwant Khuba has alleged that the forest watcher took the extreme step due to the harassment by Forest Minister Eshwar Khandre, the Congress MLA from Bhalki. Khuba has demanded a thorough probe into the death of the forest watcher.

SAD DEMISE

Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints:— Psalm 116:15 (KJV)

EDGAR. A. J. PAUL
DOB: 01-11- 1961 DOD: 05-02-2026

With deep sadness, we announce the passing of Edgar Paul loving husband of Caroline and devoted father of Deborah (Debbie).

Funeral Service will be held at Indranagar Methodist Church, 100ft Road, Indranagar, Bengaluru on Saturday, 7th February 2026 at 2:30 PM. and thereafter burial at 5:00 pm, Hosur Cemetery, Gate No. 1, Bengaluru.

DH DECCANHERALD

Obituaries & Remembrance Advertisements

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OBITUARY

VIMALA RANGASWAMY
With profound sorrow, we announce that our mother attained Acharyan Thiruvadi on 5th February 2026. She went peacefully amidst loved ones.

A Srinath +91 9845887790
Sita Kumar +91 9901338822

OBITUARY

We regret to inform you the sad demise of **R. Murthy**, Prop. R. J. Enterprises (S/o Late Ramaswamy) on 06-02-2026. The last rites will be performed on the 07-02-2026 at Wilson Garden Crematorium at 4 PM.

In loving memory

V VENKATA REDDY
Former Vice Chairman Bannari Amman Sugars Limited
Passed away peacefully on 06.02.2026. In ever loving memory of a role model of love, affection, kindness and humility. Praying to the God to allow the soul to rest in peace.

In fond remembrance
Srivari Foundation, Bengaluru.
RSVP : 99000 59500 / 97403 50000

War resumes in Cong: BJP

Leader of the Opposition in Assembly R Ashoka said the "D K Shivakumar versus Siddaramaiah" war has begun once again. "DKS has clearly said Yathindra is the high command, not Sonia Gandhi, Rahul Gandhi or Kharge. Yathindra has declared his father will remain CM for five years. This shows how powerless the Congress high command has become."

YATHINDRA SIDDARAMAIAH
Congress MLC

The Congress high command has given a clear signal in this regard, although they have not mentioned it anywhere. The high command has not responded to calls for leadership change from some quarters.

Synthetic drugs: A state of alarm

Is Karnataka quietly turning into a hub for synthetic drug manufacturing? That unsettling question arises from a string of major narcotics busts carried out not by local police, but by external agencies. It is also no coincidence that the state has recorded a sharp 63% rise in cases registered under the Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (NDPS) Act – from roughly 4,000 cases in 2024 to nearly 7,000 in 2025. While senior police officers attribute this surge to increased vigilance and better detection, the numbers equally point to the easy availability of drugs. This indicates that organised networks are expanding their reach and targeting vulnerable segments, particularly the youth. This is especially alarming in a state that hosts a large student population drawn from across the country.

Cities like Mysuru and Bengaluru, long viewed as relatively calm and low-profile, now appear to be emerging as preferred locations for clandestine drug labs, precisely because they attract less scrutiny than traditional metropolitan crime centres. The fact that synthetic drugs such as Mephedrone and MDMA seized as far away as Gujarat and Maharashtra are being traced back to units in Karnataka suggests that the state is fast turning into a manufacturing hub. Three major raids by Mumbai Police and Narcotics Control Bureau (NCB) in quick succession have brought this risk into sharp focus. What is particularly embarrassing is that the local police either remained unaware of these units or chose to look the other way. Worse still, the raids were publicly downplayed, the valuation of seized drugs disputed, and the existence of functional labs denied, not just by police officers, but even by Home Minister G Parameshwara.

These raids establish that synthetic drugs are now being manufactured locally, not merely smuggled into the state. This demands a shift from episodic enforcement to sustained intelligence-led action. The Anti-Narcotics Task Force must work in close coordination with the NCB to track red-flag indicators in industrial clusters where illicit labs often operate under the cover of cleaning-chemical units. Intelligence capabilities must expand to include financial and digital trails, particularly the procurement of specialised equipment and chemicals through anonymous and cryptocurrency-based channels. The focus should move beyond seizures to dismantling the economic foundations of the trade by freezing and confiscating properties acquired through drug money under the NDPS Act, with strict adherence to due process to ensure stronger convictions. Above all, the state must identify and act against the black sheep within the police force who enable these networks. Without credible action, Karnataka risks becoming a nerve centre for organised narcotics syndicates.

Hauls in other states are being traced to Karnataka. The response must go beyond seizures

Menstrual hygiene through a rights lens

The Supreme Court’s ruling that the right to menstrual hygiene and health is a fundamental right, integral to the right to life under Article 21 of the Constitution, is significant in a country where the subject is not addressed with the seriousness it deserves. A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and R Mahadevan issued a series of directions to states and Union Territories and schools, both in the public and private sectors, to provide free biodegradable sanitary napkins, separate toilets, clean water and safe disposal facilities, and to set up menstrual hygiene corners for girls. Financial constraints should not be used as an excuse for non-compliance with the directions, the Court said. It noted that the denial of menstrual hygiene facilities amount to a violation of bodily autonomy. Describing the situation as “menstrual poverty”, the apex court held that the State will be accountable for non-compliance by government-run schools and errant private schools could be de-recognised.

The order will benefit millions of young women in the country, especially in the 10-19 age group, who form at least a third of all menstruating women. An estimated 36 crore women are in the menstruating age in India, most of whom do not have access to essential hygiene. Many in the younger age groups discontinue their education because of inadequate facilities in schools. They are forced into early marriages and motherhood, especially in rural areas. A national policy relating to menstrual hygiene for school-going girls prescribes norms and guidelines but they are hardly followed. The Supreme Court has done well to shift the responsibility of implementing the directions to governments and school authorities.

Menstruation continues to carry stigma in many parts of the country. Despite decades of efforts to dispel the misreadings in society, it presents social and psychological challenges to women. The top court declaring the right to menstrual hygiene as a fundamental right signals a major shift because the right has been made judicially enforceable. This is a ruling which aligns with international practices and resolutions by the United Nations Human Rights Council calling for universal access to affordable, safe, and clean menstrual hygiene products and facilities. The Court may have spelled out its position on the matter with clarity and force, but implementation comes with its own set of challenges. Translating the Court’s directions to tangible results will take extensive public campaigns, sensitisation of teachers and parents, support extended by counsellors, involvement of women’s agencies, and curriculum integration.

SC ruling emphasises compliance and places the responsibility on governments and schools

COMMENT

THE NEW FRONTIER

AI moment: India must choose pragmatism over hype

Its strategy must be application-led, economically grounded, and informed by labour realities

PRASHANT KUMAR CHOUDHARY AND ALOK ADITYA

India’s stance on Artificial Intelligence (AI) has moved from the margins of policy debate to the centre of economic decision-making. The previous economic surveys largely framed AI as a futuristic possibility, while the Economic Survey 2025-26 discusses its presence across banking, logistics, healthcare, education, and governance. Yet the real challenge before India is no longer adoption alone, but its alignment with economic structure, labour realities, and developmental priorities.

In 2025, global AI adoption reached nearly 88% of organisations, while only 7% had fully integrated it across operations. High-income countries account for nearly 58% of global AI deployment, while low- and middle-income countries together account for just over 40%. This skewed usage reflects a deeper asymmetry where, while AI use is spreading, the capacity to build and control advanced AI systems remains highly concentrated.

At the frontier of AI development lie large foundational models that demand enormous computing power, energy, data, and capital. Training a single frontier model can cost hundreds of millions of dollars, require town-scale electricity consumption, and place significant pressure on water resources through large data centres. Access to advanced chips and high-bandwidth memory is increasingly shaped by global supply constraints and export controls. For most countries, including India, attempting to replicate such capital-intensive pathways would impose prohibitive fiscal and environmental costs.

The Economic Survey 2025-26, therefore, advances the clear proposition that India’s AI strategy must be grounded in economic realism rather than technological imitation. The budgetary allocation for India’s AI mission underscores the practical challenges of implementation. The revised expenditure for the IndiaAI Mission has been scaled down from the budgeted Rs 2,000 crore to Rs 800 crore in 2025-26, with a similar allocation of Rs 1,000 crore for 2026-27, against the originally envisaged Rs 10,300 crore outlay over five years.

India ranks among the top global contributors to AI research publications, hosts one of the world’s largest pools of technical talent, and ranks

second only to the United States in AI workforce literacy. Yet paradoxically, India accounts for only about 2% of global start-ups focused on training data curation, pointing to an underdeveloped domestic data value chain. This gap matters, as access to high-quality, context-specific data is becoming a critical bottleneck in AI development.

Given these conditions, the Economic Survey makes a strong case for a bottom-up, application-led AI ecosystem. India stands to gain more by developing AI models that are cheaper to train and easier to adapt to different sectors. The model requiring limited hardware will be best suited to India.



Locally grounded AI solutions are already emerging in India. In agriculture, AI-enabled platforms have improved price discovery and logistics for nearly 1.8 million farmers across 12 states. In healthcare, low-cost AI-based screening tools are expanding early cancer detection in resource-poor settings. Municipal bodies are deploying AI systems to monitor water usage, classroom learning outcomes, and disaster risks. Language technologies, particularly voice-based systems, are extending digital access to non-English speakers, addressing long-standing inclusion gaps.

The economic implications of AI adoption are nuanced. While the early fears of mass job displacement have not yet materialised, evidence from advanced economies suggests a more subtle shift. AI adoption has weakened the traditional relationship between output growth and employment creation, where productivity continues to rise, but employment growth has become less responsive to economic expansion.

In the policy context, India faces the dual challenge of AI adoption. On the one hand, delaying AI adoption to protect jobs could lock firms into low-productivity trajectories. On the other hand, rapid and uncalibrated automation may boost efficiency but risks displacing workers into low-value

service roles faster than the economy can reabsorb them. As global firms increasingly automate routine coding, testing, and support functions, India’s traditional role as the world’s back office is under strain. Hence, India’s success in AI for growth will depend on the sequencing and speed of AI diffusion so that labour augmentation, reskilling, and institutional adjustment can occur in parallel.

Regulation without overreach

Internationally, AI regulation ranges from stringent risk-based frameworks to largely voluntary guidelines. India’s innovation ecosystem is still fragmented, resource-constrained, and heavily start-up-driven, and cannot bear the burden of stringent compliance requirements without stifling experimentation. At the same time, regulatory absence risks undermining trust, especially as AI systems are deployed in education, finance, and governance.

The latest Economic Survey report, therefore, argues for regulation that is light, incentive-based, and risk-weighted, emphasising transparency, product registration, and targeted oversight in high-impact applications. Governance of AI in India not only demands careful calibration but also the protection of human capability. Emerging evidence cited in the Survey suggests that excessive reliance on generative AI for cognitive tasks may weaken critical thinking and learning outcomes, particularly among students.

With over 100 crore broadband subscribers, India represents one of the world’s largest sources of human-generated data. Rather than imposing rigid data localisation, policy is shifting towards retaining economic value from domestic data while remaining open to cross-border flows. Hence, even with the emphasis on accountability and auditability in domestic AI data processing, a balance between strategic autonomy and global integration requires a clear set of rules. Complete self-sufficiency is neither feasible nor desirable, but excessive dependence on foreign AI systems, particularly in critical sectors, carries long-term risks.

AI is not an inevitable destiny but a strategic choice. Therefore, India needs to shape an AI ecosystem that is economically grounded, socially responsive, and institutionally aligned rather than chasing the technological frontier. In the AI era, restraint and realism may prove as important as speed.

(Prashant is an assistant professor at the Department of Public Policy, Manipal Academy of Higher Education; Alok is a senior research fellow at the Centre for Economic Studies and Policy, ISEC)

RIGHT IN THE MIDDLE

The great *nellikai* heist

What began with *uppu-kaara* ended with me stuck in a wall

PRANAV V S

When I was in Class 4, my friend Surya began bringing *uppu-kaara pudu* – salt-chilli powder – to class in a small paper *potlam*. Just as our teacher, Parameshwari Ma’am, turned to the blackboard, Surya would quietly unfold the paper, bend down and tongue the mixture.

Those of us without *potlams*, like Karthik and me, watched him longingly as he let out little muted pops. Sometimes, overcome by kindness, Surya would do us an *upkaara* and share his *uppu-kaara*. Thus went life when, in the middle of April, Shankara walked in after lunch, chest puffed out, and said, “How many days will you fellows keep licking this powder?”

What did he mean? Surya asked, slightly offended. Shankara said, “Nanjappa’s house has three *nellikai* (gooseberry) trees.”

For the next two days, we spent our PT period standing on our bicycle backseat drooling at Nanjappa’s *nellikais*. Surya couldn’t take it anymore. He climbed onto the grey stone wall, hoping to jump in, but we were such *chultanis* that a fall would have broken a bone or two.

While we were wondering what to do, Karthik noticed a ditch near the wall. And like the end of *ringa-ringaroses*, the four of us fell down and began digging with our bare hands. Somebody or the other kept interrupting our work, eyeing what we were doing, so we worked in shifts. Using our cycles as camouflage, we dug with stones and sticks. Karthik even brought a large screwdriver, smuggled in by poking a hole in his shorts pocket. In four days, we had a hole big enough to crawl through.

Surya and Shankara were like *kaddis* (sticks), so they slipped through easily, while Karthik and I stood guard. When they returned looking like children from detergent advertisements, we squealed – bulging pockets full of neon-green *nellikais*. That day, half the class were tap-tapping their tongues to the tune of our loot.

A week of this bliss passed before Karthik betrayed me. I was a rotund boy and did not feel comfortable squeezing through holes in walls. My friends felt I wasn’t putting in equal effort. That afternoon, Karthik announced, “*Dadiya chultanis* that a fall would have broken a bone or two.”

Before I could utter the “ba” of *beda*, I was crawling through the hole, rehearsing lies for Amma about my uniform. But once we reached the trees, I forgot everything. Such glorious green stars! We shook the tree till it rained *nellikais* on us like hail. We stuffed our pockets and headed back.

As I crawled through, I saw something strange: a pair of large black boots right in my face. I looked up. Lighthouse Satish, our PT teacher. Shankara and Surya, who had crawled out before me, were crying, holding their ears in monkey pose.

Upper body inside, lower body outside, I was stuck like in some medieval torture device. Karthik, roused to mischief by a free bum, began stomping on it, cackling, “*Ey Dadiya*, stucka? This is why I say eat less.” I was in tears.

How was I to explain to Karthik what was awaiting him on the other side?

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Prevent recurring institutional conflicts

I refer to ‘When Governors Turn Political’ (Feb 6). The recent conduct of governors in non-NDA-ruled states highlights the growing strain between governors and elected state governments. Constitutional provisions, judicial rulings, and legislative debates have limited gubernatorial discretion. The office is meant to represent the people as a whole, not the interests of any political party. However, successive Union Governments have ignored the Sarkaria Commission’s recommen-

dations, particularly regarding the appointment of governors and the sparing use of discretionary powers. Adhering to the commission’s recommendations, constitutional obligations, and judicial pronouncements is essential to prevent recurring institutional conflicts. Upholding the sanctity of the Constitution and federalism is key, rather than erasing symbols of the colonial era. **Albert Smith**, Bengaluru

Curb screen time

Apropos ‘Ghaziabad triple suicide: Korean obsession figures in diary’ (Feb 6), the recent Ghaziabad incident highlights the need to address digital addiction among children and teenagers. Many parents struggle to control their youngsters’ screen time, and teenagers often resist authoritarian approaches. The government should impose age-specific

smartphone and login restrictions, as other nations have done. Schools should also educate children about the long-term effects of excessive online engagement. **Kamal Laddha**, Bengaluru

Welcome safety initiative

With reference to ‘Women-only auto service set for launch next week’ (Feb 6) launching a platform

for women offers safety and comfort to women passengers, particularly during late hours. It’s a welcome initiative that could enhance women’s mobility and security. **Lingden A Kichu**, Bengaluru

Our readers are welcome to email letters to: letters@deccanherald.co.in (only letters emailed – not handwritten – will be accepted). All letters must carry the sender’s postal address and phone number.

SPEAK OUT

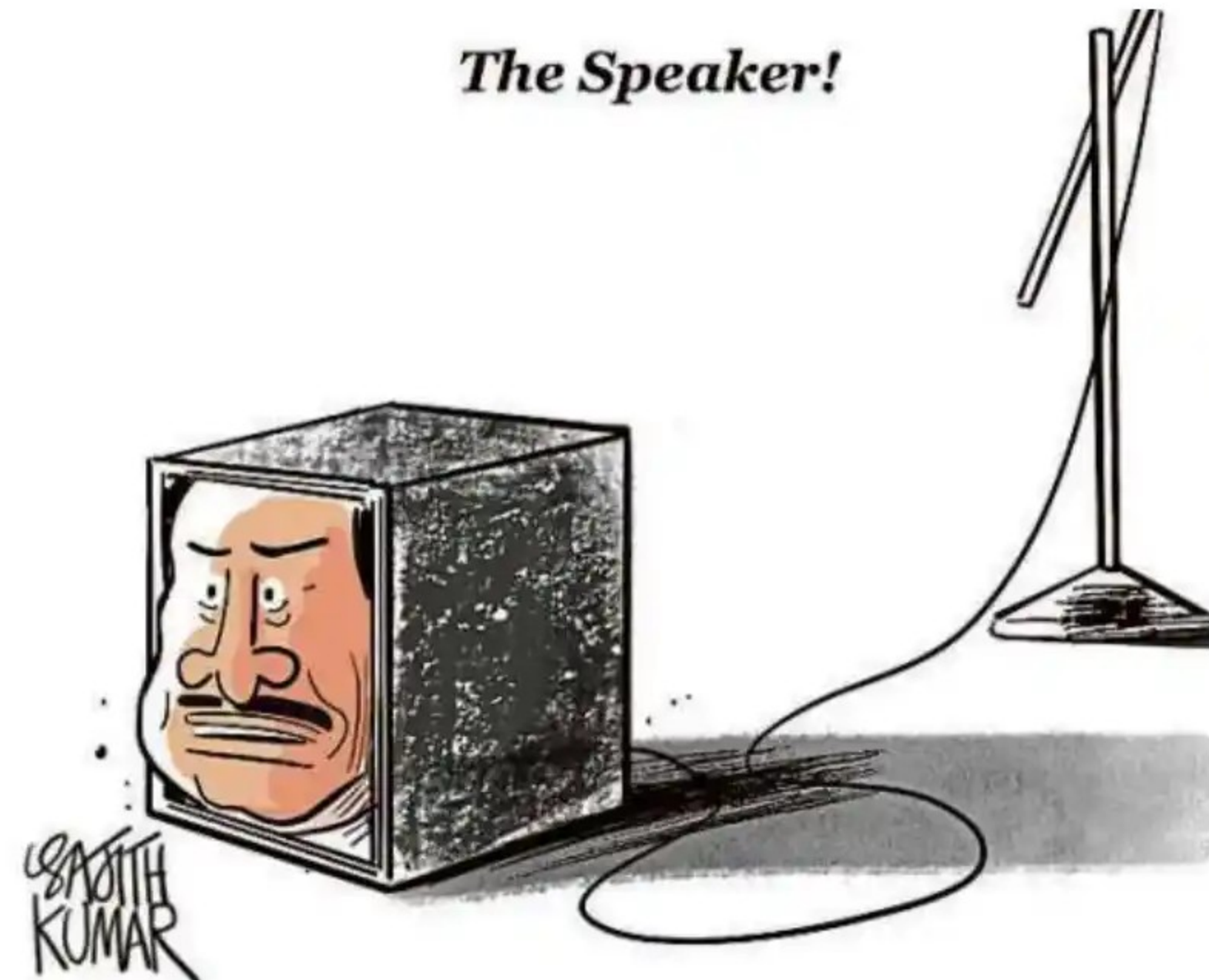
Nothing has happened. There is no question of me resigning. I have not done any such wrong thing. There is no evidence (of the scam).



R B Timmapur,
Karnataka Excise Minister

Absence of evidence is not evidence of absence. **Carl Sagan**

TO BE PRECISE



IN PERSPECTIVE

Deep scars and some hard lessons

What a leopard taught me about conflict, survival, and coexistence

SANJAY GUBBI

February 7, 2016, was not a date of any particular significance. Yet it became a day I will remember for the rest of my life. That Sunday afternoon, a call from a senior forest department officer took me to VIBGYOR School in Whitefield, Bengaluru’s IT hub. A leopard had entered the school campus, and I was requested to assist the department in capturing the animal. During the operation, the highly stressed leopard attacked me, leaving me grievously injured. What followed were multiple surgeries, months of rehabilitation, and an overwhelming financial burden.

For almost a year after the incident, aggregator-based taxi drivers would ask, “Sir, were you the one at the VIBGYOR School?” When I replied yes, they would often say, “I knew it when I saw your name on the booking.” I realised how deeply the episode had entered public memory. Even today, people occasionally say, “Oh, you were the one injured by the leopard near the swimming pool.” While the incident is slowly fading from public recollection, it left me with hard-earned insights into the realities of human-wildlife conflict, especially the pain survivors endure and the long-term impacts on their lives.

When I speak to communities affected by leopard conflict, they listen differently. They know I understand their fear, loss, and uncertainty. This experience has made me a strong advocate for a more humane and empathetic response to victims of human-wildlife conflict. I have consistently urged governments and officials to be more compassionate and generous towards families who suffer losses due to wildlife.

The physical aftermath was severe. For a long time, mobility itself became a challenge, affecting not just my body but my mental well-being. Transitioning from an active life to struggling with short walks was deeply disheartening. It was only in 2022 – thanks to advances in medical science and unwavering family support – that I could walk normally again.

I set myself a personal milestone to mark recovery: climbing Kudremukh peak in the Western Ghats, a mountain that holds deep meaning for me. In November 2023, I finally stood atop it. The moment was exhilarating – not just as a physical achievement, but as a reminder that resilience can carry us through even the most unexpected setbacks. Ironically, this philosophy

of resilience came from a leopard. Yet the future of that species – and many others – appears increasingly bleak.

Since 2016, conflict with leopards has increased manifold. Hundreds are captured, translocated, or pushed into captivity. People have lost their lives; many more are grievously injured. The drivers of this conflict are well known: habitat loss, depletion of prey, unplanned development, and lack of awareness. Yet little changes, largely because those most affected are socially and economically marginalised.

What is particularly troubling is how the suffering of these communities is often romanticised. The term “human-wildlife coexistence” is repeatedly invoked by civil societies, sometimes cynically, to attract funding, awards, and international recognition, while families continue to bear the costs. In Junnar taluka of Maharashtra, a wildlife biologist once hailed their work as a model of coexistence with leopards. Once the funding and attention followed, the biologist moved on to greener pastures. This narrative is not limited to leopards; elephants, tigers, crocodiles, sloth bears, and many more are all framed similarly. Co-existence cannot be built on helplessness and fear.

Slogans don’t solve

Government responses are often delayed. As conflict intensifies, community support for conservation erodes, retaliatory actions increase, and political pressure mounts. Legislatures respond to popular anger, and executives struggle to hold their ground. Media coverage too often amplifies fear rather than building understanding. In this confusion, wildlife becomes the biggest casualty.

The scars from that day, whether I like it or not, are a part of me; some visible, many not. The deeper trauma now comes not from the incident itself, but from witnessing the direction in which human-wildlife conflict is heading in India.

I could view the scars as symbols of failure. Instead, I see them as proof of survival. It wasn’t my day of death; it was the first day of the rest of my life. And that perspective compels me to speak out.

If we truly believe in co-existence, we must move beyond rhetoric. Addressing human-wildlife conflict requires empathy, scientific planning, timely governance, and honest engagement with affected communities, along with sincere efforts to tackle the root causes of conflict. Only then can we give coexistence – not as a slogan, but as a lived reality – a genuine chance.

(The writer holds a PhD on leopards and is the author of Leopard Diaries: The Rosette in India)

Madras HC dismisses Vijay's plea against I-T Dept penalty

CHENNAI, DHNS: In a set-back to actor-politician Vijay, the Madras High Court on Friday dismissed his petition against the Income Tax (I-T) Department penalising him Rs 1.5 crore for failing to voluntarily disclose an additional income of Rs 15 crore during the 2015-16 fiscal.



TVK chief Vijay

The I-T Department imposed the fine after claiming to have unearthed the undisclosed income during searches at the actor's premises in 2015.

The amount is related to Vijay's salary for the 2015 Tamil film "Puli", of which nearly Rs 5 crore was allegedly paid in cash and not voluntarily disclosed in his tax returns.

Justice Senthilkumar Ramamoorthy refused to set aside the fine, observing that Vijay disclosed the additional income only after the search operations.

The judge also concluded that the penalty order had been issued within the period of limitation prescribed under the I-T Act. "Hence, there was no infirmity warranting interference with the order," the judge added.



The bike of a motorcyclist who plunged into an uncovered pit being lifted out at Janakpuri in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

25-yr-old dies in pit dug by Delhi Jal Board

NEW DELHI, PTI: A motorcyclist died after falling into a 15-feet-deep pit dug by the Delhi Jal Board (DJB) for construction work in west Delhi's Janakpuri area, police said on Friday.

The deceased has been identified as Kamal Bhayani (25), a resident of Kailashpuri, who worked at the call centre of a private bank, police said. Preliminary probe suggests that the pit was dug at a DJB construction site, which was barricaded, a senior police officer said.

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Friday termed the death of the motorcyclist a "murder", alleging that an "epidemic of greed and negligence" has claimed another life. In a post in Hindi on X, Gandhi said, "The epidemic of greed and negligence plaguing India has claimed another young life today. A son, a dream, the entire world of his parents — all shattered in an instant."

Three DJB engineers have been suspended. Water Minister Parvesh Verma has directed a comprehensive safety audit of all ongoing sewer, road and flood control projects across Delhi.

Home Minister reviews border security in J&K

SRINAGAR, DHNS: Home Minister Amit Shah on Friday visited forward areas along the border in Jammu and Kashmir's Kathua district, on the second day of his three-day tour of the Union Territory amid heightened counter-terror operations and an intensified focus on border management.

Shah inspected the Gurnam and Bobiyian border outposts in the Hiranagar sector and interacted with Border Security Force (BSF) personnel deployed along the frontier. Officials said the visit was aimed at reviewing ground-level preparedness to prevent infiltration attempts and curb cross-border smuggling of weapons and narcotics.

Says Modi is avoiding Lok Sabha as his 'morale is shaken', 'swagger diminished'

SHEMIN JOY
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Congress president Mallikarjun Kharge on Friday attacked Prime Minister Narendra Modi over his Rajya Sabha speech, claiming he was "scared" of answering questions Rahul Gandhi posed and was avoiding the Lok Sabha as his "morale is shaken" and "swagger diminished" following revelations in retired Gen M M Naravane's memoirs and the Epstein Files.

Alleging that Modi was twisting statements to accuse Congress leaders of wanting to dig his grave, Kharge said they were only saying they would "bury your ideology", and it was not about a person.



Leader of Opposition in the Lok Sabha Rahul Gandhi and other opposition members stage a protest over trade agreement with the US, the controversy surrounding former Army chief MM Naravane's unpublished memoir, and the suspension of MPs, in New Delhi on Friday. PTI

He said Modi did not refer to a single issue during his 97-minute speech in reply to the debate on the Motion of Thanks to the President's Address in the Rajya Sabha.

He also referred to Speaker Om Birla's statement that he asked Modi not to come to the

Lok Sabha as he had "concrete" information about the PM being targeted in the House, and alleged that Modi was using the pretext to avoid answering questions in the Lok Sabha.

"If your intelligence is so good, where was it during Pulwama (terror attack)? Lynch-

ings are happening across the country; attacks on Adivasis and Dalits are taking place. Where does this intelligence go then?" he asked. Referring to a series of Modi's remarks, including his attack on late PM Manmohan Singh, Kharge said, "This reflects Modi's

mindset. It seems his morale is shaken, and the swagger and talk of a '56-inch chest' have diminished." He added: "If a person in the PM's position uses abusive language against democracy and the country, that's not a good thing. Modi is afraid of what questions Rahul will ask, what he will say, what facts he will present, so Modi doesn't even sit in the House."

Kharge also said the government should have responded to the claims in Gen Naravane's unreleased memoirs and ended the matter, but was stalling Parliament instead, which was a "failure of democracy".

"When we got hold of Gen Naravane's book, how could those in power not have it?... The truth is that Modi doesn't dare answer the questions we have asked. The real issue is that the PM seems disturbed. I read in newspapers about the Epstein Files... After those reports surfaced, it appears [US President Donald] Trump pressured him. He then knelt and signed a trade deal, sacrificing our farmers," claimed the Congress chief.

Tamil Nadu slows down Hosur airport land acquisition amid protests

CHENNAI, DHNS: With elections approaching and protests erupting in some places, the DMK government in Tamil Nadu has decided to slow down the process of acquiring land for the proposed Hosur airport.

Around 3,000 acres of land — including 800 acres owned by the government — are to be acquired for the facility, which is planned with an annual capacity to handle three crore passengers. The state government also intends to

write once again to the Union government seeking airspace clearance for the project. In January, the Defence Ministry had expressed its inability to allot airspace to the Hosur airport, citing Hindustan Aeronautics Ltd operations in and around Bengaluru.

"We received a brief response in January on the non-availability of airspace due to HAL's operations. We are reviewing the response and will write to the authorities concerned on the need

for an airport in Hosur and how the facility will help not just the city but also Bengaluru," a source told *DH*. The source added that there was sufficient time to resolve the airspace issue.

Another source familiar with the developments told *DH* that the Krishnagiri district administration is making corrections to the Land Development Plan for the project, as suggested by the Commissioner of Land Administration.

Congress-DMK shaken in Puducherry

CHENNAI, DHNS: After Tamil Nadu, the Congress and the DMK are now fighting over the Assembly elections in neighbouring Puducherry, with the Dravidian outfit launching seat-sharing talks with its allies without consulting the national party.

Also, the DMK in Puducherry is planning to demand more than the 13 seats that it contested in the 2021 polls from the Congress, leading to further rift.

Railways' financial health improved: Vaishnaw

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Union Railway Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw told the Rajya Sabha on Friday that the financial health of Indian Railways has improved significantly over the past decade.

He emphasised that the national transporter now generates a small revenue surplus after covering all its costs. This improvement stems from concerted efforts to boost freight traffic, enhance passenger revenue and control expenses through greater operational efficiencies. During Question Hour in the Rajya Sabha,



Railways Minister Ashwini Vaishnaw speaks in the Rajya Sabha on Friday. PTI

Vaishnaw highlighted key factors contributing to the surplus, including savings of Rs 5,500 crore in energy costs, improved maintenance practices, and an

increase of 400 million tonnes in freight traffic. In the 2024-25 fiscal, the operating ratio stood at 98.22%, gross traffic receipts at Rs 2,65,114 crore, and the surplus at Rs 2,660 crore, he said.

Vaishnaw added that the railways' staff cost is around Rs 1.18 lakh crore for about 12 lakh employees, while pensions for 18 lakh retirees amount to Rs 65,000 crore. The energy cost is Rs 32,000 crore, finance cost Rs 23,000 crore, and maintenance cost Rs 8,000 crore.

The overall cost of railways is about Rs 2.74 lakh crore, he added.

SC warns T'gana Speaker of contempt

NEW DELHI, DHNS: The Supreme Court on Friday told Telangana Assembly Speaker that contempt action would be initiated if he failed to decide within three weeks the disqualification petitions in connection with the defection of 10 Bharat Rashtira Samithi (BRS) MLAs to the Congress.

A bench of Justices Sanjay Karol and AG Masih told senior advocate Abhishek Singhvi, who appeared for the Speaker, "We request you not to make reels out of it. This is what is happening. Do not do it. What is happening is, it is a new industry." The counsel said the decision has been taken in one case, and the Speaker is on the verge of taking a call in two other cases.

The counsel, representing the BRS MLAs, said the Speaker had sought time earlier as well, and only a single meeting has been held in this regard.

The bench said in the previous hearing that the Speaker had sought three weeks, but the court had granted him two weeks to see if there was any development. "We expect the Speaker to positively take a decision, failing which we shall proceed to issue contempt," the bench said.

Apex court seeks explanation on NEET-PG cut-off

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court on Friday asked the National Board of Examination in Medical Sciences (NBEMS) to explain the reasons for reducing the qualifying cut-off percentages for NEET-PG 2025-26.

"Our conscience has to be satisfied that there is no devious reason, that's all," a bench of Justice PS Narasimha and Justice Alok Aradhe said, as questions were raised over the board's decision to reduce the qualifying percentile to zero for reserved categories, which will make the score as low as minus 40 out of 800.

A batch of pleas challenged the January 13 notice issued by the NBEMS reducing the qualifying cut-off percentiles for counselling of the third round of NEET-PG 2025-26 for various categories. Taking up the matter, the bench said it will review the decision to lower the cut-off marks once it receives a response from the Centre and others. The court sought to know the reasons from the NBEMS to explain why the cut-off was lowered so drastically.

It observed that the issue involved competing considerations, which were required to be balanced. The petitioners' counsel contended that standards ought to be stricter at the postgraduate level.

The bench said on the one hand, it has a competing value to protect the seats, and the seats should not go to waste. "At the same time, there is pressure that candidates are not coming, so please reduce the cut-off," the bench said. The general category cut-off was reduced from 276 to 103 marks, while the SC/ST/OBC category cut-off was lowered from 235 to minus 40 marks. The petitioners contended that the decision was arbitrary and compromised standards and patient safety.

With over 18,000 postgraduate medical seats across the country remaining vacant, the board revised the qualifying percentiles for NEET-PG 2025 admissions, reducing it to zero from 40 percentile for reserved categories, which will make even those scoring as low as minus 40 out of 800 to take part in the third round of counselling for PG medical seats.

Sabarimala gold heist dominates political events in Kerala

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Kerala on Friday witnessed the BJP, Congress, and CPM's top leaders slam each other over the Sabarimala temple gold heist in the run-up to the Assembly elections.

While the ruling CPM and the Opposition Congress accused each other, BJP national president Nitin Nabin attacked them both.

In his maiden visit to Kerala after taking over as the BJP chief, Nabin said the accused in the case were getting bail because of a tactical understanding between the CPM-led LDF and the Congress-led UDF.

Meanwhile, Chief Minister Pinarayi Vijayan said the key accused in the gold heist case, Unnikrishnan Potti, first entered the shrine (as an assistant to the priest) in 2004 while a Congress leader, who now holds a key position at the national level, was the state's devaswom minister. He was targeting AICC general secretary K C Venugopal, who was the devaswom minister in the UDF government in 2004.

Hitting back, Venugopal alleged that the gold heist happened with the LDF government's connivance.

Top court endorses preliminary inquiry rule for FIRs on social media posts

NEW DELHI, DHNS

The Supreme Court declined to interfere with the Telangana High Court's judgment that laid down guidelines requiring a preliminary inquiry and verification of the locus standi of complainants before lodging FIRs in cases involving social media posts against the government and political executives.

A bench of Justices JB Pardiwala and Vijay Bishnoi upheld the guidelines issued through the September 10, 2025 judg-

ment, which stated that the police should not mechanically register cases concerning harsh, offensive or critical political speech.

Criminal law may be invoked only when such speech amounts to incitement to violence or poses an imminent threat to public order. The court emphasised that constitutional protections for free political criticism under Article 19(1)(a) of the Constitution must be scrupulously enforced. Sidharth Luthra, appearing for Telangana government, submitted that the

guidelines issued by the high court were inconsistent. He urged the SC to examine them. The bench, however, said, "We are of the view that we should not interfere."

The HC had observed that with a view to safeguarding fundamental rights and preventing the criminal process from being invoked mechanically or arbitrarily, it was appropriate to prescribe a set of guidelines for police authorities and judicial magistrates when dealing with proceedings arising from social media posts.

POLITICAL SPEECH

- SC upholds Telangana HC guidelines, declines to interfere with directions protecting political speech
- Says no mechanical FIRs over harsh political posts
- Says only incitement warrants FIRs in such cases
- Emphasises constitutional protections for free political criticism under Article 19(1)(a)

SANJAY PANDEY
LUCKNOW, DHNS

Taking cognisance of social media posts and protests, the Uttar Pradesh government on Friday ordered the registration of an FIR against the director and creative team of Netflix's upcoming film 'Ghooskhor Pandat'.

According to police sources, a case was registered at the Hazratganj police station for promoting hatred among communities, hurting religious sentiments and

caste insult.

Sources said Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath directed officials to register the FIR against the movie, whose teaser was released a few days ago.

The film's teaser triggered a major controversy, with members of the Brahmin community staging protests at several places and demanding a ban on the movie.

Amid the uproar, filmmaker Neeraj Pandey and lead star Manoj Bajpayee posted statements on social media, announcing that the team had

pulled the film's promos from the internet.

Pandey said the film is a fictional cop drama and the term "Pandat" is used simply as a colloquial name for a fictional character. "The story focuses on an individual's actions and choices and does not comment on or represent any caste, religion, or community. As a filmmaker, I approach my work with a deep sense of responsibility - to tell stories that are thoughtful and respectful," the filmmaker said. *(With PTI inputs)*

FIR against 'Ghooskhor Pandat' for caste insult; promos pulled down

Tiger sparks
panic in Andhra
villages

HYDERABAD, DHNS: A tiger has plunged residents on the outskirts of Rajamahendravaram in Andhra Pradesh's East Godavari district into panic after killing five cows, one goat and two dogs over the past week.

People in Rajamahendravaram rural and Rajanagaram mandals remain gripped by fear.

On Friday morning, villagers in Kurmapuram reported hearing roars from an abandoned house. Forest department staff rushed to the spot and confirmed the tiger was inside. Experts tried to tranquillise it with a sedative dart, but the panicked animal bolted into nearby fields, killed a dog and devoured it on the spot.

By evening, the tiger was spotted in a cattle shed after killing a calf. Forest and police officials are trying to capture the big cat using nets and tranquilliser guns.

The attacks escalated on Wednesday night, when the tiger killed a cow in palm oil orchards within Bhupalapatnam limits of Rajanagaram mandal. It then moved to G Yarrampalem's palm oil orchards, killing two more cows and partially eating a dog before abandoning the carcass.

Forest officials inspected the sites on Thursday and found tiger paw prints. A specialist rescue team from Pune has also joined the operation.

Top Maoist leader
among 7 killed in
Maha encounter

Camps of
CPI (Maoist)
cadres busted

MUMBAI, DHNS

In a major anti-Naxal operation, seven Maoists, including top leader Prabhakar, who carried a reward of Rs 25 lakh, were killed in the Abujhmad jungles of Bhamragad tehsil in Maharashtra's Gadchiroli district.

The operation is being seen as a significant step towards making Gadchiroli Naxal-free. However, one commando of the elite C-60 unit of the Gadchiroli police laid down

his life during the encounter. Prabhakar was the in-charge of the Gadchiroli Division Committee, head of the West Sub-Zonal Bureau, and commander of Company No. 7 of the CPI (Maoist). A resident of Kamareddy district in Telangana, he was neutralised in an exchange of fire with the police, sources said.

The encounter began on Tuesday evening following specific intelligence inputs. A total of seven Maoist cadres and commanders — four men and three women — were killed during the fierce gun battle. The identities of three Maoists are yet to be established.

During the operation, security forces also busted camps used by CPI (Maoist) cadres. The encounter took place near Phodewada village on the Gad-

chiroli-Narayanpur border.

The operation involved the Gadchiroli police's C-60 unit along with a Quick Action Team (QAT) of the Central Reserve Police Force.

Police constable Deepak Chhina Madavi (38), attached to the Special Operations Team, Pranahita, was injured during the encounter. A native of Mandara village in Aheri tehsil, he was airlifted by helicopter from the dense Abujhmad forest to the sub-district hospital in Bhamragad, where he succumbed to his injuries, the district administration said.

Another jawan, Joga Madavi, sustained bullet injuries but is stated to be out of danger.

Police recovered one AK-47 rifle and two self-loading rifles (SLRs) from the spot. More details are awaited.

Kamra moves HC
against Centre's
Sahyog portal

MUMBAI, DHNS: Standup comedian, and political commentator Kunal Kamra, along with senior advocate Haresh Jagtiani, has moved the Bombay High Court against the Centre's Sahyog portal, calling it an “unconstitutional and unreasonable assault” on the freedom of speech as it allows officials to take down content from social media platforms.

The portal gives content-withdrawal directives to platforms like X, YouTube, and Meta.

In the pleas, filed separately, the duo raised serious constitutional questions centring on the freedom of speech, due process, and the scope of government powers over online content.

The Sahyog portal was developed as a dedicated cyber platform that automated this process and facilitated the quick removal of unlawful online information, data or communication links.



Protesters attack a vehicle during a 24-hour shutdown against the participation of Kuki-Zo MLAs in Manipur government formation, in Churachandpur, on Friday. PTI

Kuki-Zo groups
protest against MLAs
joining Manipur govt

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The BJP's Kuki MLAs, who chose to join the Manipur government, continue to draw fire from Kuki organisations, who staged a massive rally in Churachandpur on Friday, demanding that they step back.

Hundreds from Kuki-Zo communities took to the streets and shouted slogans, some even burning effigies of three MLAs, during the rally organised by two prominent Kuki women's organisations — the Kuki Women's Organisation for Human Rights and the women's wing of the Indigenous Tribal Leaders' Forum.

Effigies of Nemcha Kipgen, a woman Kuki MLA who took oath virtually as the deputy chief minister from New Delhi on Wednesday, and two other MLAs — L M Khaute and Ngursanglur, who attended the swearing-in event in Imphal — were burnt.

Kuki-Zo organisations roared in anger as Kipgen took the oath, ignoring organisations' appeals against it in the absence of a “written commitment” — regarding the fulfilment of their demand for a Union Territory.

The Kuki Zo Council (KZC), the apex body of Kuki groups engaged in talks with the government, said on Friday: “Overwhelming participation in today's rally reflects the deep anguish, anger and collective rejection of the decision by the Kuki MLAs to join the Manipur government.”

It added: “The decision was in complete disregard of the public sentiment, collective resolutions and the immense suffering endured by our community.” Many pelted stones at the security forces on Thursday evening at Churachandpur when they were allegedly stopped from enforcing a shutdown. Tyres were burnt to block a road forcing deployment of additional forces.

Chabahar: Iran
wants to expand
cooperation
with India

NEW DELHI, PTI: Describing the Chabahar port as “vital” for regional connectivity, Iranian envoy Mohammad Fathali on Friday said Tehran believes it should expand its ties with India on the project, against the backdrop of recent changes in US sanctions policies.

Addressing a press conference in Delhi, Fathali was asked about the future of the Chabahar Port project.

“About the port of Chabahar, you know that the port of Chabahar is vital. It can play an important role in accessing Afghanistan and Central Asia. We have good relations with some countries, particularly India, and we believe that we should boost and expand our relations on this issue,” he said.

On Friday, the Indian government was asked in the Lok Sabha whether it had reviewed strategic, financial and operational engagement in the Chabahar project.

“An Indian company, India Ports Global Ltd, through its wholly owned subsidiary, India Ports Global Chabahar Free Zone, started operating the port in 2018. On May 13, 2024, IGPL signed a ten-year contract with the Ports and Maritime Organisation of Iran for equipping and operating the Shahid Beheshti Terminal of Chabahar Port,” Minister of State for External Affairs Kirti Vardhan Singh said in a written reply.

Life bigger than marksheet, PM tells students

NEW DELHI, DHNS: Prime Minister Narendra Modi addressed students, parents and teachers at 'Pariksha Pe Charcha', delivering a message against exam-related anxiety and performance-driven pressure, and calling for a more

grounded and disciplined approach to learning.

Interacting with students from across the country, the PM said examinations should not be treated as a judgment on a student's worth. “Exams evaluate preparation, not the

person. Your life is far bigger than a marksheet,” he said, urging students to stay focused on effort rather than outcomes. He welcomed students with the Assamese gamusa.

On stress and fear, Modi said the pressure surrounding

exams is often externally created. “The real burden does not come from exams; it comes from expectations — of parents, society, and sometimes of ourselves,” he said, adding that calmness and self-belief are critical during exam phase.



ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಸರ್ಕಾರ
ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ
ಮುಕ್ತಗೋಷ್ಠಿ, ಮೈಸೂರು-570006.
ಅಡಳಿತ ವಿಭಾಗ



ಸಂಖ್ಯೆ:ಕಸುಮಂ/ಅ/ವಿ/ಬಿ-5/ಲೇಸಾವಿ/26/2025-26/02 ದಿ: 04.02.2026

ಬೆಂಗಳೂರು ಪ್ರಕಟಣೆ

ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ರಾಜ್ಯ ಮುಕ್ತ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯಕ್ಕೆ ಲೇಖನ ಸಾಮಗ್ರಿಗಳು ಮತ್ತು ಕಾಂಪ್ಯೂಟೇರನಗಗಳನ್ನು ಸರಬರಾಜು ಮಾಡುವ ಬಗ್ಗೆ ಅಸಕ್ತ ಸಂಸ್ಥೆಯ ವರದಿ ಒಂದು ವರ್ಷದ ಅವಧಿಗೆ ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ **K.P.P.P** ಮೂಲಕ ಸ್ಪರ್ಧಾತ್ಮಕ ಬೆಂಡರ್ ಅನ್ನು ಅಪ್ಲಾಯಿಸಲಾಗಿದ್ದು, ಹೆಚ್ಚಿನ ವಿವರಗಳನ್ನು ವಿ.ವಿ ನಿಲಯದ ವೆಬ್‌ಸೈಟ್ **www.ksoumysuru.ac.in** ಹಾಗೂ **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** ಅನ್ನು ನೋಡುವುದು. ಇ.ಎಂ.ಡಿ. ಮೊತ್ತ ರೂ.2,60,000/- ಗಳನ್ನು ಹಾಗೂ ಇ-ಬೆಂಡರ್ ಪ್ರೊಸೆಸಿಂಗ್ ಹಣವನ್ನು ಇ-ಪ್ರೊಕ್ಯೂರಮೆಂಟ್ ಪೋರ್ಟಲ್ ಮುಖಾಂತರ ಪಾವತಿಸುವುದು.

DIPR/DDMYS/1617/KSMCA/916/2025-26 **ಸಹಿ/- ಕುಲಸಚಿವ**



ಬೀದರ್ ವಿಶ್ವವಿದ್ಯಾಲಯ
BIDAR UNIVERSITY

ಬಿಡ್ನ ಕಾರಂಜಿ ಹಾಲಡ್ಡ್ (ಕೆ), ಬೀದರ್ 585 414 ಕರ್ನಾಟಕ ಭಾರತ
Office of the Registrar (Academic) Section -mail:registrarbidar@gmail.com

No. BUB/ACD/COMP/ /2025-26 **Date: 02-02-2026**

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(E-Procurement two cover system)

The Bidar University, invites tender from eligible service providers for the Supply and installation of Desktop PC, Laptop, A4 Colour MFP, Projector and Scanners as per Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act. The tenderers who have registered under E-governance Department of Karnataka may participate through e-tendering system. The approximate estimated cost of the procurement is of Rs. 1.0 Crore. Tender documents may be downloaded from the E-Procurement Website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. The eligible tenderers shall submit their proposal under e-procurement platform on or before the dates as scheduled in the e-portal. For any more information contact the Registrar, Bidar University, 9449391184.

Sd/- Registrar



KARNATAKA SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY PROMOTION SOCIETY (KSTePS)
Dept. of Electronics, Information Technology, Bio-Technology and Science & Technology, GoK



Room No.: 507, 5th Stage, M.S. Building, Bangalore-560001.
Ph: 080-26711166; Email: ksteps.dst@gmail.com, Website: http://kstps.karnataka.gov.in

No. KSTePS/Innovation Lab/2025-26 **Dated: 05.02.2026**
Indent No.: ITBTST/ 2025-26 /IND0025

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal only)

Karnataka Science and Technology Promotion Society (KSTePS), Bengaluru invites bids as per details given below:

Particulars: "Tender for supply and installation of Innovation Lab equipment at 90 KREIS Schools / Colleges across the state through KSTePS, Dept. of Electronics, Information Technology, Bio-technology and Science & Technology, GoK, Bengaluru, Karnataka

The Bids will be received through **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** tendering mode only. Any details required in this regard can also be obtained from the Office of KSTePS during Office hours. **Calendar Events:** Last date for submission of completed tender documents: **06.03.2026 at 5:30 PM.**

Sd/- Managing Director

DIPR/CP/IA/5478/2025-26



PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT
Office of the Executive Engineer, PWD Bengaluru Division,
2nd Floor, PWD Annexure Building, K.R. Circle,
Bengaluru-01, Phone: 080-22133370

No. 52/2025-26 **Date: 05.02.2026**

SHORT-TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION

Item-rate tenders, for the work in PWD, **Nelamangala Sub-Division** under this office noted below, are invited by the undersigned on behalf of the Governor of Karnataka in accordance with Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Rules 2000 and as per Standard Tender Documents for procurement of works from the contractors registered in K.P.W.D. as per KPMP. Tender Notification is Published for **05 works (Rs.185.00 Lakhs to Rs. 500.00 Lakhs)** Details of the tender works can be obtained from the above Office during office hours on working days. **EMD & Tender processing fees are mentioned in KPP Portal http://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**

SI.No.1: (1) Tenders must be submitted online through KPP Portal on **or before 4.00 P.M. on: 13.02.2026 (2)** The opening of tenders through KPP Portal on: **16.02.2026 at 4.30 P.M.** or further date and time will be intimated.

SI.No.2 to 5: (1) Tenders must be submitted online through KPP Portal on **or before 4.00 P.M. on: 20.02.2026 (2)** The opening of tenders through KPP Portal on: **21.02.2026 at 4.30 P.M.** or further date and time will be intimated. For more details contact this office.

Sd/- Executive Engineer
DIPR/DD-C/P/5481/KSMCA/2025-26



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT,
DIVISION, CHITRADURGA

No.EE:PWD:CTA:AE-2:Tender-60:2025-26 Dated:- 04.02.2026

SHOR TERM E-TENDER NOTIFICATION

Tenders are invited from registered Contractors in KPWD for the following work through KPMP Portal as per standard tender documents rules.

Name of work:- Two cover System :- Head of Account 4059-80-051-0-60-132 CMIDP Works: (1) CONSTRUCTION OF TWO SIDE DRAIN, ROAD MEDIUM AND DECORATIVE ELECTRIC POLES IN STATE HIGHWAY MANDYA HADAGALI (SH-47) ROAD AT CH 201.75 KM TO 202.75 KM IN HOSADURGA TALUK (W.I.31909)
Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:- 260.00

(2) Widening and Improvement to Kumata-Kadamadagi Road (SH-48) from Km 296.58 to 297.98 of Challakere constituency in Challakere taluk (Working Chainge Km 296.58 to 297.05) (W.I.32738) Estimate Cost Rs. in Lakhs:-200.00

Sl. No. 1 Tender dates are as mentioned below: Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 19-02-2026 Time: 17.30
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 20-02-2026 Time: 16.00
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 21-02-2026 Time: 16.15
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 23-02-2026 Time: 11.00

Sl. No. 2 Tender dates are as mentioned below:Late Date & time for Tender Queries/ Clarifications 11-02-2026 Time: 17.30
Last Date & time for receipt of tenders 12-02-2026 Time: 16.00
Date & time for opening of Technical Bid 13-02-2026 Time: 16.15
Date & time for opening of Financial Bid 16-02-2026 Time: 11.00

Further details can be obtained from this office and H.P. Company helpline Numbers 080-25501216 and 080-25501227.

DIPR/CTA/KSMCA/ 648/2025-26 **Sd/- Executive Engineer PWD, Chitradurga**



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA - Zilla Panchayat, Shivamogga

Office of The District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Shivamogga-577201.

Phone: 08182-222382 e-mail ID: dhoshimogga@gmail.com
No.: DHFWS/O.S./16/2025-26 **Date: 04.02.2026**

Tender Notification

Sub.: Regarding e-Tender Invitation for providing services for Group – D and other posts on outsource basis to District Subordinate Health Institutions for the year 2026-27.

Ref.: File approval of Hon'ble Deputy Commissioner Dt. 03.02.2026.

Tender applications are invited from eligible contractors as per Two Cover System as it has been approved in the file by Hon'ble Deputy Commissioner, Shivamogga for availing through e-procurement services of Pharmacy Officer and Junior Laboratory Technical Officer on outsource basis to District Subordinate Health Institutions from the date of approval of Tender for the year 2026-27 (From 01.04.2026 to 31.03.2027 or up to the end of the next Tender Process).

1. Approx. Amount of Tender: As on e-Portal **2.** Commence ment date for uploading the Tender in e-Portal: As on e-Portal **3.** Last date and time for uploading the Tender Application: As on e-Portal **4.** Date of opening the Technical Bid: As on e-Portal **5.** Date of opening the Financial Bid: As on e-Portal **6.** E.M.D. Amount to be uploaded in Tender: As on e-Portal

Sd/- District Health and Family Welfare Officer, Shivamogga
DIPR/sm/g/No.ksmc/25-26/4502/1788



KRISHNA BHAGYA JALA NIGAM LIMITED
(A Government of Karnataka Undertaking)

Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatti- 586201.
E-mail:dam_division@rediffmail.com

No: KBJNL/DDA/PB/TND/2025-26/2850 **Dated:02.02.2026**

SHORT TERM TENDER NOTIFICATION
(Through KPP Portal Only)

On behalf of the Managing Director, KBJNL, Bangalore the undersigned invites tender on Item Rate & Percentage basis from the eligible contractors for the work indents of **Two Cover**– (1) I.No. 2647 – 383.73 Lakhs (Others). **The contractor can have access and submit e-tender from 04.02.2026 to 23.02.2026 up to 5-00 PM. Pre-Bid Meeting Chief Engineer, KBJNL Dam Zone Almatti For I.No. 2647 is 16.02.2026 Cover-II (Technical Bid) will be opened on 25.02.2026 at 11-00 AM And Financial Bid Will be Opened on 02.03.2026 at the Office of the Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2 Almatti-586201.** For clarifications office of the undersigned may be contacted during office hours (Phone No. 08426-281027). Further information about electronic tendering can be had from kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Executive Engineer, KBJNL, Dam Safety Unit-2, Almatti

ವಾಹನಂ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/667/ ಕೆಪ್‌ಎಂಎಂ/2025-26



THE KARNATAKA STATE CRICKET ASSOCIATION
M.Chinnaswamy Stadium, Cubbon Road , Bangalore – 560 001

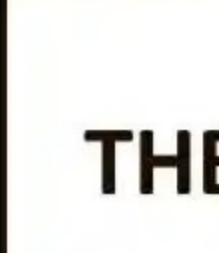
Tender Notification

The Karnataka State Cricket Association, M.Chinnaswamy Stadium, Cubbon Road, Bangalore, invites sealed tenders from GST Compliant, registered class I and above KPWD/CPWD/Equivalent contractors for the work of widening the emergency passage near Gate No.4 for easy movement of Fire Tender at KSCA.

1	Name of work	Widening the emergency passage near Gate No.4 for easy movement of Fire Tender at KSCA
		Estimated Cost –Rs.35,75,043/- plus taxes EMD – Rs. 36,000/- Cost of tender form Rs.2500/- plus taxes (Non refundable)
2	Issue of tender form	7/2/2026 to 17/2/2026
3	Pre bid meeting	17/2/2026
4	Last date of submission of filled tender form two covers bid system	18/2/2026 before 4.30p.m (Technical & Commercial Separately) Technical bid will be opened on same day at 5.30 p.m. Any delay will be intimated
5	Completion of work by	20 Days from the date of work order

Tender documents may be obtained from the Office of the KSCA, by submitting a requisition in the company's letter head between 11.00 a.m to 5.00 p.m on any working days. For any clarification please contact Mr.H.A.Venkatesprasad , Consultant Engineer , Mobile No. 9945604515/8494904495

(Chief Executive Officer)
KSCA



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
THE EXECUTIVE ENGINEER, PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT DIVISION, VIJAYAPUR.

I.F.T.No: EE/PWD/VJP/PB/4059/5054/2025-26/4622

Dated:05.02.2026

TENDER NOTIFICATION
(E-Procurement)

The Executive Engineer, Public Works Dept. Division, Vijayapur Invites tender from eligible tenderers (registered in Public Works Department) Total 33 work, 7 – Works are reserved Scheduled Cast, Scheduled Tribes & For CAT-II(A) Contractors for As per standard bid documents KW-1,2,3&4 with Different Head of Account costing of Maximum and Minimum amount for Rs. 200.00 Lakhs & 20.00 Lakhs, the EMD Maximum and Minimum amount of Rs. 3,00,000/- & Rs. 50,000/- for the works. For the above works G.S.T shall not be paid in the extended period of Contract for which the contractor alone is responsible for delay as determined by the authority while granting the extension of time. The calendar events of tenders, dates are fixed as follows. 1) Pre-Bid Meeting for Contractors. Date: 17.02.2026 at 11:00 AM. 2) Last date for Receipt of Tenders Date: 23.02.2026 upto 4.30 PM. 3) Opening of Technical Bid Date: 24.02.2026 at 4.31 PM. 4) Opening of Financial Bid Date: 25.02.2026 at 4.30 PM on words Clause-3 Conditions of Standard Bid Document may be seen in Departmental Website i.e https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in and for more information may contract help desk Bangalore (Phone No. 91 80 46010000. +91 80 68948777) or office of the undersigned.

Sd/- Executive Engineer,PWD Division, Vijayapur

ವಾಹನಂ/ವಿಜಯಪುರ/678/ಕೆಪ್‌ಎಂಎಂ/2025-26



GOVERNMENT OF KARNATAKA
Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Department. Office of the Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division Koppal.

NO: EE/MID/Koppal/Corrigendum/2025-26/5056 **Dated: 05/02/2026**

CORRIGENDUM

Ref:- This office tender notification No :4973 Dated: 30.01.2026

Adverting to the above cited reference, The Work2in respect of the tender conditions/documents may please be read as follows.

As Notified Earlier: Opening date for submission of tender documents.: 04.02.2026 **Now To be Read as:** Opening date for submission of tender documents.: **09.02.2026**

As Notified Earlier: Pre bid meeting will be held on.: 11.02.2026 at 11.00 Hours **Now To be Read as:** Pre bid meeting will be held on.: **16.02.2026** at 11.00 Hours

As Notified Earlier: Last date for submission of completed tender documents.: 21.02.2026 up to 17.30 Hours **Now To be Read as:** Last date for submission of completed tender documents **25.02.2026** up to 17.30 Hours

As Notified Earlier: Date of opening of Technical Bid Document: 23.02.2026 , 11.00 Hours **Now To be Read as:** Date of opening of Technical Bid Document: **27.02.2026** , 11.00 Hours

As Notified Earlier: Date of opening of Financial Bid Document: 25.02.2026 , 11.00 Hours **Now To be Read as:** Date of opening of Financial Bid Document: **02.03.2026** , 11.00 Hours

All other terms and conditions of the Original tender notification remain unchanged

Sd/-Executive Engineer Minor Irrigation and Ground Water Development Division Koppal.

DIPR/Koppal/660/KSMCA/2025-26



Visvesvaraya Technological University
“Jnana Sangama” Belagavi –590 018, Karnataka State

Ref. No. VTU/BGM/RE/HK/MP/SECU/ 2025-26/IFT No.137/5773, Date: 5th Feb 2026

Short Term Tender Notification - Two Cover System(KPP Portal Only)

As per the Karnataka Transparency in Public Procurement Act-1999 & Rule 2000, The Registrar, V.T.U., Belagavi invite tenders through KPP Portal basis from eligible tenderers, registered in Labour Department & other concerned department for the following works or; 1) Providing Man Power Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU Regional Centres Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kalaburagi, Extension Centre, Mangaluru, NASD., Dandeli, Talkal, Chintamani, Gokak & P.G. Centre of VIAT., Muddenhahalli amounting to Rs.2,91,06,197/- (Excluding GST) 2) Providing House Keeping Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU Regional Centres of Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kalaburagi, Extension Centre, Mangaluru, P.G. Centre, VIAT., Muddenhahalli., NASD., Dandeli, Skill Development Centre, Talkal, Gokak, Chintamani & Choranahalli amounting to Rs.3,69,54,820/- (Excluding GST) 3) Providing Security Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU Regional Centres of Bengaluru, Mysuru, Kalaburagi, Extension Centre, Mangaluru, NASD., Dandeli,Talkal, Chintamani, P.G. Centre, VIAT., Muddenhahalli., & Choranahalli amounting to Rs.3,79,39,151/- (Excluding GST) 4)Providing Housekeeping & Garden Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU, “Jnana Sangama”, Belagavi amounting to Rs.2,61,47,136/- (Excluding GST) 5) Providing Security Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU, “Jnana Sangama”, Belagavi amounting to Rs.2,05,51,315/- (Excluding GST) 6) Providing Manpower Services through Outsource Agencies at VTU, “Jnana Sangama”, Belagavi amounting to Rs.3,97,12,559/- (Excluding GST) & 7) Providing Man Power Services through Outsource Agencies to Examination Scanning Centre at VTU, “Jnana Sangama”, Belagavi & VTU Regional Centre, Bengaluru amounting to Rs.2,84,93,044/- (Excluding GST).Other details log on to website **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in** on 06-02-2026

DIPR/Belagavi/1778/ DeshpandePublicity/2025-26 **Sd/- Registrar, VTU, Belagavi**



National Health Mission
KARNATAKA STATE HEALTH & FAMILY WELFARE SOCIETY
Arogya Soudha, 1st Floor, Magadi Road, Bengaluru - 23
Ph: 080-23113584 e-mail: pdrch-hfws@karnataka.gov.in



No: HFWS-NCAO00THR(OTHR)/65/2025 (E-2010193) **Date: 06.02.2026**

Expression of Interest (EOI) (Through e-Procurement)

For Supply of Petrol, Diesel, CNG and Consumables for the vehicles used by NHM

National Health Mission invites Request for proposal from eligible service provider with necessary documents, Tender Notification for Expression of Interest (EOI) with PQ Tender No. NHM/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_2 for supply of Petrol, Diesel, CNG and consumables for the vehicles used by NHM.

Tender No: NHM/2025-26/PREQUAL_TENDER_NUMBER_2

The detailed notification regarding eligibility and other details can be obtained by logging on to **https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in**. The tender document can be downloaded through “e-procurement portal” from **04.02.2026** onwards and last date for receipt of tender is on or before **19.02.2026 at 11.00 AM**. Further details can be obtained from the office of the undersigned during the office hours from 11:00 AM to 05:30 PM.

Sd/- Project Director (RCH)

DIPR/CP/5496/SA/2025-26

Omar questions need to profile mosques

J&K CM flags reports of scribes being questioned for their coverage

ZULFIKAR MAJID
SRINAGAR, DHNS

Chief Minister Omar Abdullah on Friday questioned the necessity of the police-led exercise to profile mosques, madrassas, and their management in Jammu and Kashmir, saying the move was unwarranted and had raised serious concerns about the intent behind it.

Speaking during the discussion on the vote of thanks to the Lieutenant Governor's address in the Assembly, Abdullah said surveying mosque imams was "completely inappropriate" and demanded clarity from the Union government on why such an exercise was being undertaken. "Why is there a need to poll mosque imams?

NIA searches GMC Anantnag in 'white-collar' terror case

The National Investigation Agency (NIA) on Friday carried out searches at the Government Medical College (GMC) in Jammu and Kashmir's Anantnag district in connection with the "white-collar" terror module that was busted last November, officials said, reports DHNS.

The searches stemmed from earlier recoveries in the case, including a rifle that was allegedly found in the locker of a doctor during investigations last year. One of the key accused in the case is Dr Adeel Ahmad Rather, a former senior resident doctor at GMC Anantnag.

This only creates fear and mistrust," he said.

The profiling drive was initiated last month following the busting of a "white-collar" terror module last October. While authorities have projected the exercise as a security measure, Abdullah cautioned against approaches that, he said, blurred the line between counter-terror efforts and routine religious activity.

The CM also flagged reports of journalists being summoned for questioning over reportage and commentary

on the issue, calling it a troubling development. Referring to constitutional guarantees, he said summoning writers or reporters over opinions would only deepen apprehensions and have a chilling effect on free expression.

In January, Jammu and Kashmir Police began collecting details of mosques, madrassas and their management committees across the Valley. The exercise drew criticism after journalists in Srinagar reported being questioned about their coverage.



Search and rescue operation underway at the coal mining site in East Jaintia Hills, Meghalaya, on Friday. PTI

Meghalaya coal mine death toll reaches 25; two held

SUMIR KARMAKAR
GUWAHATI, DHNS

The toll due to the mishap in an illegal coal mine in Meghalaya's East Jaintia Hills district reached 25 on Friday, with seven more bodies counted.

The police said four more bodies were recovered on Friday, while the bodies of two others, taken away by their families on Thursday, were brought to the hospital, while one injured individual succumbed to his wounds.

At least 18 bodies were recovered on Thursday morning from Mynsynghat, a remote village, where an explosion took place inside an illegal coal mine.

The police, meanwhile, took two people into custody on Friday for allegedly running the illegal coal mine and carrying out the dynamite explosion that caused the tragedy. The two were suspected of being the owners of the mine.

The accused persons arrested are: Forme Chyrmang and Shamehi War. Both hails from East Jaintia Hills district. The two have been remanded to three day police custody by a court on Friday, East Jaintia Hills district SP, Vikash Kumar said.

He added that 17 bodies have been identified.

The rescuers, including NDRF personnel, continued search operations in the presence of members of several families who were still clueless about the fate of their kin.

UPSC overhauls exam centre policy in inclusivity push

NEW DELHI, DHNS

In a major step towards greater inclusivity, the Union Public Service Commission (UPSC) has introduced changes in how exam centres are assigned, with special priority given to persons with benchmark disabilities (PwBD) for the Civil Services Examination (CSE) 2026 and Indian Forest Service (IFoS) Examination 2026.

The key reform removes any capacity limits specifically for PwBD applicants. The examination centres will initially accommodate both PwBD and non-PwBD candidates on a first-come, first-served basis.

Once a centre hits its regular limit, it closes for further non-PwBD selections — but remains open indefinitely for PwBD candidates who prefer it. If needed, the UPSC will add extra seating or infrastructure at those locations to accommodate every PwBD request without compromise.

Explaining the rationale behind the move, UPSC chairman Ajay Kumar said, "An analysis of examination centre data over the past five years revealed that certain centres — including Delhi, Cuttack, Patna and Lucknow — reach capacity at a very early stage due to high application volumes, creating difficulties for PwBD candidates."

"With the revised mechanism, every PwBD candidate will be assured of their preferred centre," he said.

Ease of participation

Kumar said that the commission has adopted the use of the latest technology to ensure a free, fair, inclusive and accessible examination process, with a strong focus on enhancing candidate convenience and ease of participation, while ensuring that selections are made strictly on merit.

Aspart of efforts to improve efficiency, transparency and candidate convenience, the UPSC has also introduced a revamped Online Application Portal.

Malayalam actor held, then granted bail in hit-and-run case

THIRUVANANTHAPURAM, DHNS: Malayalam actor Maniyanpillai Raju was arrested and released on bail in a hit-and-run case here on Thursday night.



Maniyanpillai Raju

The actor, who was coming out of a club in his car, was alleged to be drunk as he did not stop after the accident. However, he denied the allegation and said that he did not stop because of fear. He also said that he was a cancer patient and hence was not using alcohol.

Raju surrendered to the city police by Friday morning. He was later released on bail after the police registered a case against him under various sections of BNS and the Motor Vehicles Act.

As per the CCTV footage, a motorcycle coming in at high speed hit Raju's car while he was crossing the road. Two motorcyclists, identified as Nivedith Krishnan and Sooraj, suffered leg fractures and spine injuries, respectively.

MISCELLANY

COMICS

Blondie



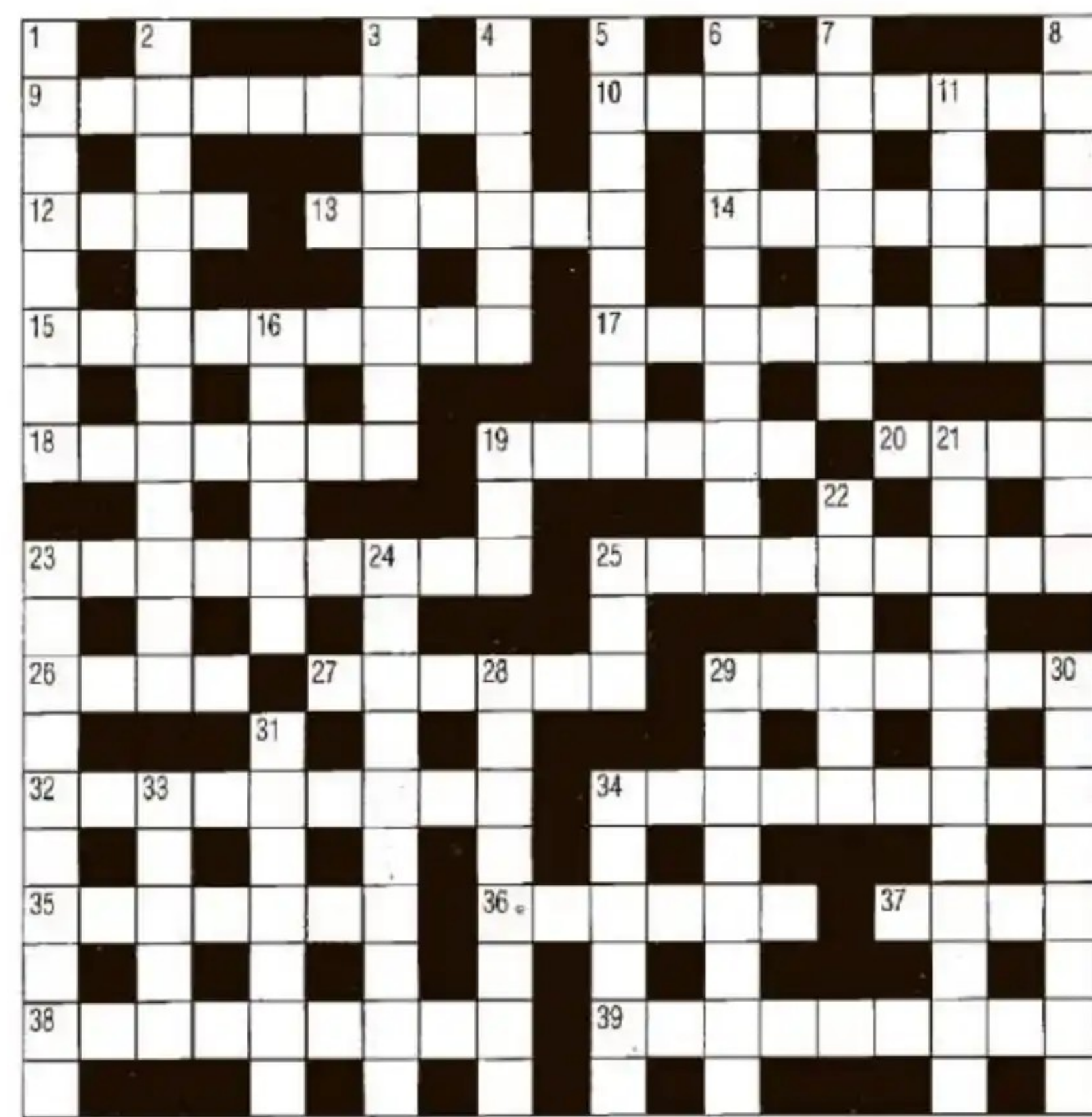
Beetle Bailey



Marvin



CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 4026



- ACROSS**
- 9 Predacious (9)
 - 10 Humble (9)
 - 12 Precipitation (4)
 - 13 Contusion (6)
 - 14 Letter (7)
 - 15 Disadvantages (9)
 - 17 Unsafe vehicle (9)
 - 18 Furniture item (7)
 - 19 Golfer's assistant (6)
 - 20 Resonation (4)
 - 23 Forced out (9)
 - 25 Soon (9)
 - 26 Outlet (4)
 - 27 Minor earthquake (6)
 - 29 Bloom (7)
 - 32 Toady (9)
 - 34 Contrived (9)
 - 35 Fruit (7)
 - 36 Involving words (6)
 - 37 Primates (4)
 - 38 Joyously unrestrained (9)
 - 39 Type of painting (5,4)
- DOWN**
- 1 Improved (8)
 - 2 Food shop (12)
 - 3 Reckless young driver (3,5)
 - 4 Song words (6)
 - 5 Protected (8)
 - 6 Essential (10)
 - 7 Deceitful craftiness (7)
 - 8 Commanding (10)
 - 11 Communion table (5)
 - 16 Chess piece (6)
 - 23 Forced out (9)
 - 25 Soon (9)
 - 26 Outlet (4)
 - 27 Minor earthquake (6)
 - 29 Bloom (7)
 - 32 Toady (9)
 - 34 Contrived (9)
 - 35 Fruit (7)
 - 36 Involving words (6)
 - 37 Primates (4)
 - 38 Joyously unrestrained (9)
 - 39 Type of painting (5,4)

CRYPTIC

- ACROSS**
- 9 Drying while you're phoning (2,3,4)
 - 10 Better than, when it comes to barbering? (1,3,5)
 - 12 Delighted to detect, you say (4)
 - 13 Said it's a surface charm (6)
 - 14 After half an hour I send food round to feed (7)
 - 15 A miniature plane, perhaps (5,4)
 - 17 Sets straight on the subject of clothes (9)
 - 18 On the day, dead annoyed about its being full of holes (7)
 - 19 An animal and one dicky bird! (6)
 - 20 Decline to become enamoured of (4)
 - 23 Giving a guarantee, which is auspicious (9)
 - 25 Set off and left after the other three, we're told (4,5)
 - 26 Moor by the river bank (4)
 - 27 Even though one has the odd bleat about it (6)
 - 29 Is he grumbling about the old-fashioned transport? (7)
 - 32 With set ideas, going off to do some bird-watching? (9)
 - 34 Is clearly irritated by and cancels (9)
 - 35 An advertisement from "15"? (7)
 - 36 About a quarter recover? How surprising! (6)
 - 37 Fool who will, given time, get sense (4)
 - 38 An ally in one form or another (9)
 - 39 Pay my debts? Lay off! (9)
- DOWN**
- 1 Deem to be deliberate (8)
 - 2 What happened when the flag was hoisted showing a flower? (8,4)
 - 3 Smiled when the spider got me agitated (8)
 - 4 The girl's been stood up again and that's tough (6)
 - 5 Speak ill of as "a ruddy awful paper" (8)
 - 6 Prepared the bed for sleeping in - didn't like it (6,4)
 - 7 Downcast and carrying an instrument, said hello (7)
 - 8 The old man, like myself, had so healthy an upbringing (10)
 - 11 Misses one most, being crazy about (5)
 - 16 Brief one on how to be a substitute? (4,2)
 - 19 The girl who took your coat? (3)
 - 21 Spring water (5,7)
 - 22 Laid waste (10)
 - 24 Gigantic (10)
 - 25 Standard (3)
 - 28 Spur on (8)
 - 29 Boy's name (8)
 - 30 Thick syrup (8)
 - 31 Group of organisms (7)
 - 33 Greek island (5)
 - 34 Agitation (6)

SU-DO-KU-6824

7	1		6		
			5	9	
			4		
		9	7		3
	4	5			8
2		7		3	5
9				5	
5			3	7	
			8		
				2	5

medium

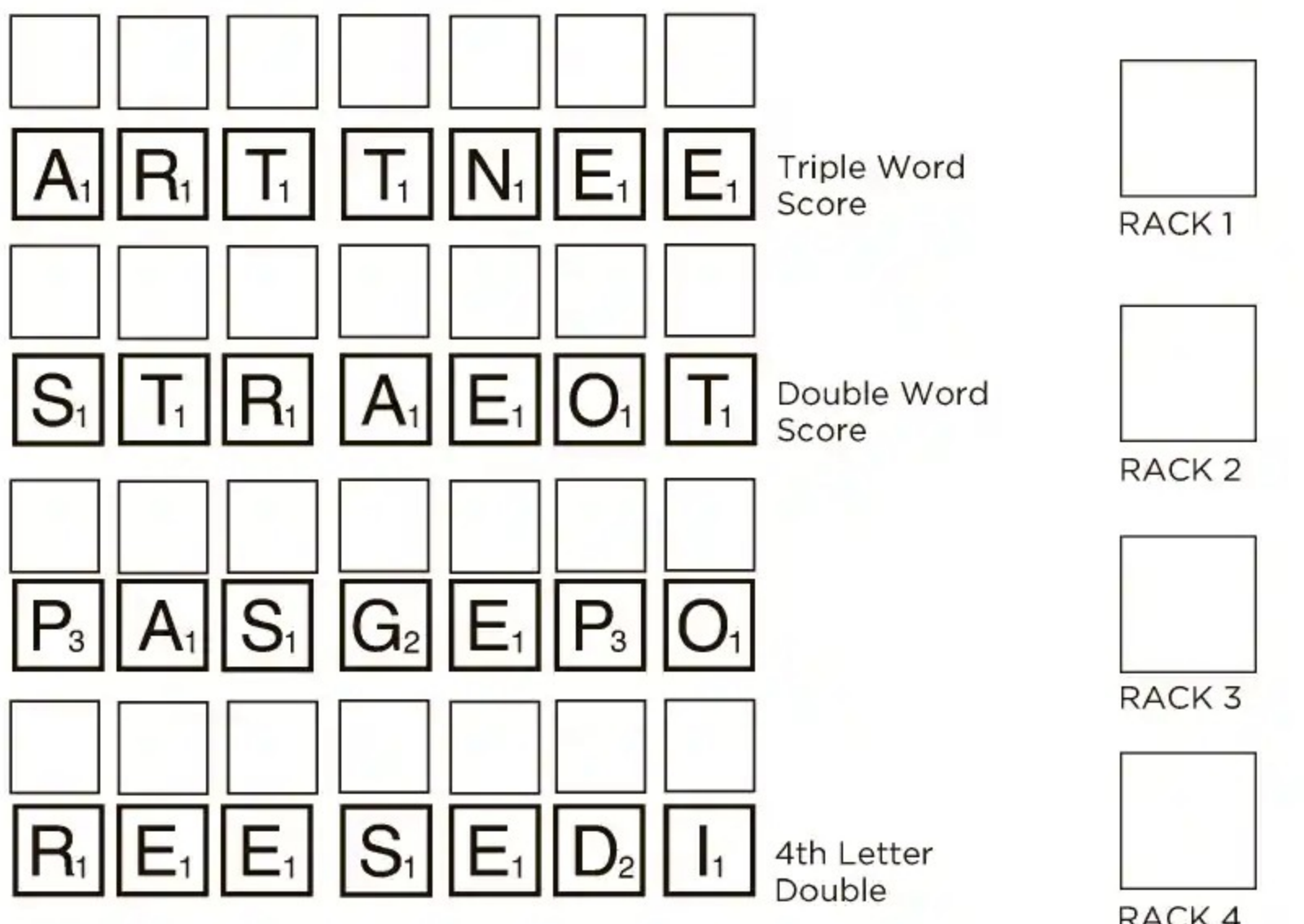
SOLUTION TO 6823

6	1	7	3	9	5	4	8	2
3	5	2	6	4	8	7	9	1
4	8	9	1	7	2	5	6	3
5	9	4	2	3	6	8	1	7
8	7	3	4	1	9	2	5	6
1	2	6	8	5	7	9	3	4
7	3	8	9	6	4	1	2	5
9	4	1	5	2	3	6	7	8
2	6	5	7	8	1	3	4	9

To solve the puzzle: To solve a su-do-ku puzzle, every digit from 1 to 9 must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows, and in each of the nine boxes.

SCRABBLE

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PAR SCORE 140-150
by JUDD

FOUR RACK TOTAL TIME LIMIT: 20 MIN

DIRECTIONS: Make a 2- to 7-letter word from the letters in each row. Add points of each word, using scoring directions at right. 7-letter words get 50-point bonus. "Blanks" used as any letter have no point value. All Judd's words are in the Collins English Dictionary. JUDD'S SOLUTION TOMORROW

YESTERDAY'S SOLUTION									
C	R	E	A	M	S	Y			
P	O	P	L	I	N				
Q	U	A	L	I	A				
P	O	O	D	L	E	S			
PAR SCORE 100-110									
JUDD'S TOTAL									
RACK 1 = 26									
RACK 2 = 10									
RACK 3 = 35									
RACK 4 = 80									
151									

HITORI-3278

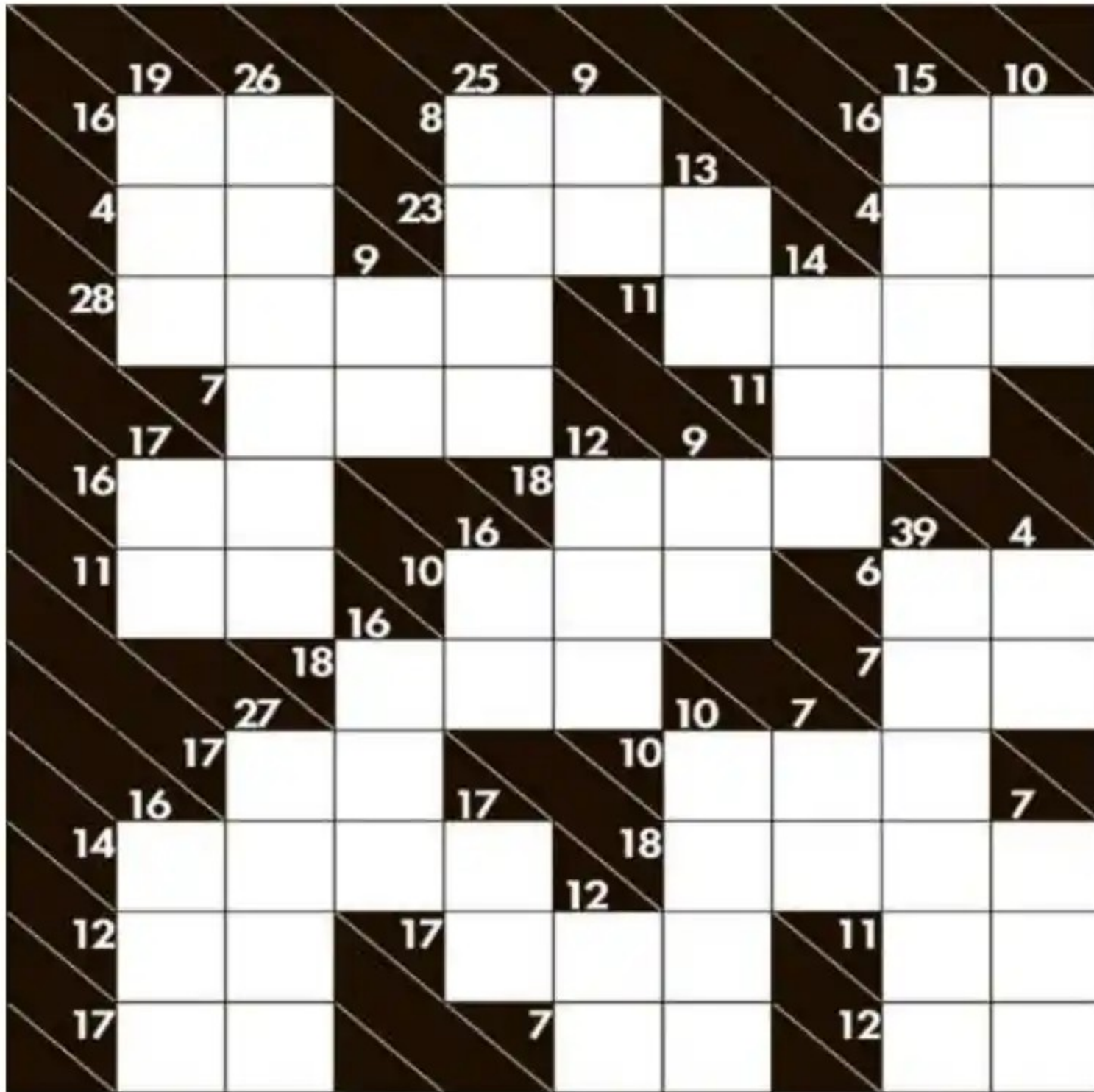
8	3	1	7	2	6	7	5
7	4	6	1	3	7	6	6
4	6	2	7	1	5	3	8
3	6	7	4	6	8	8	6
1	2	7	6	6	4	3	7
5	8	8	7	4	6	1	2
6	8	1	5	5	1	2	6
2	1	6	8	7	3	7	4

SOLUTION TO 3277

5	1	2	4	3
8	7	2	6	1
6	7	8	3	1
2	4	5	1	7
2	6	5	8	8
5	1	6	8	2
7	8	3	5	4
3	8	1	4	2

To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

KAKURO- 3278



SOLUTION TO 3277

9	6	3	1	2	5	8	7
3	2	1	3	1	2	5	8
3	2	9	5	1	2	5	8
9	5	2	4	9	7	8	7
8	4	1	2	8	6	5	1
8	7	1	9	6	5	1	2
6	1	3	2	5	9	8	7
9	3	2	5	9	8	7	3
8	4	1	6	5	9	7	1
6	8	1	2	5	1	2	5

To solve the puzzle: Put a number from 1 through 9 in a cell. No zeros. A number in a cell separated by diagonal line tells the sum of numbers in consecutive cells at its right or downward. No number may appear more than once in consecutive cells.

SU DO KU X- 3820

			1	6	7		5
	3		2				9
				3			
					5		
1							5
	9		3	7		8	
8		1				9	

SOLUTION TO 3819

7	2	6	3	5	1	8	9	4
3	9	5	8	4	2	6	1	7
1	8	4	6	9	7	3	2	5
5	4	8	1	7	6	9	3	2
2	3	1	9	8	4	7	5	6
6	7	9	2	3	5	1	4	8
4	6	7	5	1	3	2	8	9
8	5	3	7	2	9	4	6	1
9	1	2	4	6	8	5	7	3

To solve the puzzle: The objective is to place the numbers 1 to 9 in the empty squares so that each row, each column, each 3x3 box and each shaded diagonal line contains the same number only once.

MONETARY POLICY COMMITTEE VIEW: Signals longer pause after India-US trade deal

RBI keeps policy rates unchanged

GYANENDRA KESHRI
NEW DELHI, DHNS

Interest rates on home, auto and other loans are unlikely to change in the near future as the Reserve Bank of India (RBI) on Friday decided to maintain status quo on policy rates and indicated a longer pause, saying trade deals with the US and EU would support growth, even as inflation is expected to remain low.

In its last bi-monthly meeting of the current fiscal, the RBI's Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) unanimously decided to keep policy repo rate unchanged at 5.25%.

Other policy rates including standing deposit facility rate, marginal standing facility rate and the bank rate have also been kept unchanged. These rates determine the lending and borrowing rates of commercial banks and other financial institutions.

The RBI's six-member rate-setting panel also decided to continue with the "neutral" policy stance. This indicates that the central bank is not looking at increasing or lowering the policy rates in the upcoming review.

RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra said the "policy rates will continue to be at low levels for a long period of time" and may go down even further.

The RBI has lowered policy repo rate by 125 basis points (1.25 percentage point) since February 2025. In the Decem-



RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra (centre), with Deputy Governors (from left) Shirish Chandra Murmu, Swaminathan Janakiraman, T Rabi Sankar, and Poonam Gupta, before a press meet in Mumbai on Friday. PTI

ber policy review, it was lowered by 25 basis points. This has led to significant reduction in rate of interest charged by banks and other financial institutions on home, auto and other loans.

"The MPC noted that since the last policy meeting, external headwinds have intensified, though the successful completion of trade deals augurs well for the economic outlook. Overall, the near-term domestic inflation and growth outlook remain positive," Malhotra said, explaining the rationale behind the MPC's decision

to keep the rates unchanged. The six-member MPC is chaired by the governor.

The RBI raised GDP growth forecast for the current fiscal to 7.4%, from its earlier estimate of 7.3%. The projection is in line with the National Statistics Office (NSO) estimate.

For the first two quarters of FY2026-27, it has pegged the growth at 6.9% and 7%, respectively. Consumer Price Index-based (CPI) retail inflation is projected at 2.1% in the current fiscal.

Healthy growth prospects and higher inflation expecta-

tations for the next fiscal are likely to reduce the likelihood of rate cuts by the MPC. The committee may choose to save its policy rate ammunition for any unforeseen events, Crisil noted.

"With inflation remaining within the tolerance band and growth momentum continuing, the RBI's neutral stance provides much-needed policy certainty for businesses and investors," said ASSOCHAM President Nirmal Kumar Minda.

Chief Financial Officer of South Indian Bank, Vinod Francis, said, "The upward



POINTS OF POLICY
Highlights of the bi-monthly monetary policy announced by RBI Governor Sanjay Malhotra

Benchmark lending rates unchanged with repo rate at

5.25%

Monetary policy stance remains neutral

GST reforms, monetary easing, low inflation to support private consumption

Trade deals to boost exports

GDP growth projections revised upwards for Q1 and Q2 of FY27 to **6.9%** and **7%**, respectively

Measures in Union Budget conducive for economic growth

Retail inflation for current fiscal projected at

2.1%

Excluding precious metals, underlying inflation pressures remain muted

CPI inflation for Q1 and Q2 of FY27 projected at **4%** and **4.2%**, respectively

Framework soon to compensate customers up to **Rs 25,000** for losses in frauds

India's forex reserves stood at **\$723.8 bn**

RBI proposes measures to protect senior citizens from digital frauds

Banks to be allowed to lend to **REITs**

Collateral-free loan limit for MSMEs to be doubled to **Rs 20 lakh**

Branch opening norms for certain types of **NBFCs to be relaxed**

Next meeting of RBI's MPC scheduled for **April 6-8, 2026**

SOURCE: PTI

revision in FY26 GDP growth, along with the RBI's assessment that system-level parameters for banks remain sound, reinforces confidence in the sector's ability to support sustained economic expansion."

"For banks, a stable rate environment enables effective transmission of policy measures, disciplined balance sheet management, and calibrated credit growth across key segments," Francis added.

Union Budget 2026: Focus on future employability

LOHIT BHATIA

The Union Budget 2026 reads very different when seen from the vantage point of the employment economy. From where businesses that operate at scale sit, this is not a Budget about dramatic shifts, but about emphasising a direction that has been taking shape over the last few years. The macro environment has given policymakers room to think beyond immediate FY26 or FY27, and this Budget uses that window to focus on employability, workforce preparedness and execution for Viksit Bharat 2047.

The way employment is being approached sends a clear message. The emphasis is not on headline job creation, but on whether people are equipped for work that is sustainable and formal. The move to institutionalise an Education-to-Employment Standing Committee for the services sector reflects a growing recognition that India's labour market outcomes will depend on alignment rather than access alone. Services continue to absorb the bulk of the workforce, but the mismatch between education, skills and industry demand has been a persistent constraint, limiting productivity and wage growth. Closing that gap is essential if economic expansion is to translate into meaningful employment.

This line of thinking carries through the skilling interventions outlined across healthcare, allied health, geriatric and wellness services, and emerging digital roles. These sectors are expanding because of long-term population and consumption trends, which makes hiring more stable rather than cyclical. Skills that align with global standards further widen job opportunities, allowing Indian professionals to access overseas work, raise incomes and contribute back to the economy at home. Infrastructure investment continues to play a foundational role in this transition. The increase in public capital expenditure to Rs 12.2 lakh crore extends a sustained investment cycle that has already begun to in-

fluence employment and productivity across sectors. From an operating perspective, consistency in infrastructure spending matters. It improves logistics, reduces friction and creates conditions in which private investment is more likely to follow.

The continued focus on biopharma manufacturing, semiconductors, electronics components and critical materials points to an effort to build depth in industrial capability rather than rely on fragmented capacity. Fiscal choices shape how these priorities play out. The Budget 2026-27 targets a fiscal deficit of 4.3% of GDP, helping anchor confidence in the policy framework. For businesses making long-term decisions, predictability often matters as much as incentives. Stable inflation expectations and more predictable interest rate conditions allow capital allocation to be planned with greater certainty.

The Budget also addresses issues that tend to be felt more than discussed. Clarifying tax deduction norms for manpower services, reducing pre-deposit requirements in disputes, and allowing greater flexibility in return revisions ease operational friction. These measures improve cash-flow efficiency and reduce avoidable uncertainty, particularly for enterprises operating across sectors and geographies.

In totality, this year's Union Budget improves the conditions in which employment can grow steadily over time. It reflects a shift from managing short-term pressures to focusing on fundamentals that support skills, productivity and formalisation. From an employment perspective, that continuity is not incremental; it is necessary.

(The writer is CEO of Quess Corp)

Mahindra to invest Rs 15k cr in Maharashtra

NEW DELHI, PTI: Mahindra Group on Friday said it will invest Rs 15,000 crore in Maharashtra over the next 10 years, which includes setting up an automobile and tractor manufacturing facility in Nagpur. In addition, Mahindra will acquire over 2,000 acres in the Igatpuri-Nashik region to expand current product and engine capacities, as well as to support the growth of its Advanced Technology business.

Production in the facility will start in 2028 and once fully operational, will have an annual capacity of over 5 lakh vehicles and 1 lakh tractors.

"This makes it Mahindra's largest integrated manufacturing unit in the country," the company said.

"This facility is designed to support our next generation of vehicles and tractors, bringing together scale, flexibility and advanced technology within one integrated footprint," Mahindra & Mahindra Ltd Executive Director and Chief Executive Officer Rajesh Jejurikar said.

Rupee falls 31 paise to close at 90.65 against US dollar

MUMBAI, PTI: The rupee declined 31 paise to settle at 90.65 against the US dollar on Friday, weighed down by geopolitical uncertainties over the US-Iran talks, and a sharp rise in global crude oil prices.

The currency gained in the first half of the session after the RBI announced a status quo on key lending rates; however, sustained foreign fund outflows pressured the local unit, forex traders said.

At the interbank foreign exchange, the rupee opened at 90.28 against the greenback and oscillated between the high of 90.18 and the low of 90.83 during the session. It eventually settled at 90.65, down 31 paise from its previous close.

On Thursday, the rupee appreciated 13 paise to close at 90.34 against the US dollar.

"The rupee rose in the first half of the day as the Reserve Bank of India left the repo rate unchanged at 5.25 per cent, in line with expectations. However, the rupee lost initial gains amid geopolitical uncertainty over US-Iran talks," Anuj Choudhary, Research Analyst, Mirae Asset ShareKhan, said.

Date	Rate (INR)	Change
Jan 30	90.32	(+117p)
Feb 1	91.93	(+6p)
Feb 2	91.49	(+44p)
Feb 3	90.47	(-15p)
Feb 4	90.34	(+13p)
Feb 5	90.65	(-31p)
Feb 6	90.65	(-31p)

Source: PTI

He said that heightened geopolitical uncertainty may lead to risk aversion in the global market.

However, optimism over the India-US trade deal and fresh FIIL inflows may support the rupee at lower levels," Choudhary said, and projected the USD-INR spot price to trade in a range of Rs 90.40 to Rs 91.20.

Meanwhile, the dollar index, which gauges the greenback's strength against a basket of six currencies, was trading 0.01% lower at 97.81.

Brent crude, the global oil benchmark, was trading 1.38 per cent higher at \$68.48 per barrel in futures trade. FIIs purchased equities worth Rs 1,950.77 crore on Friday.

NSE board approves IPO via OFS

NEW DELHI, PTI: The board of the National Stock Exchange (NSE) on Friday cleared the decks for its long-awaited initial public offering, approving the launch of its issue that will consist entirely of an offer-for-sale, with no fresh issue component.

The decision comes shortly after market regulator Sebi granted a no-objection certificate (NOC), paving the way for the bourse to move ahead with its listing plans after more than a decade of delays.

At the same meeting, the NSE board approved the reconstitution of the IPO Committee to facilitate and oversee activities delegated for the execution of the IPO process, according to a statement.

The revamped committee will be chaired by Tablesh Pandey, non-independent director, and will include public interest directors Srinivas Injeti, Mamata Biswal, Abhilasha Kumari and GSivakumar, along with Ashishkumar Chauhan, managing director and chief executive officer.

India drops small car concession in new fuel emission rules

NEW DELHI, REUTERS

The previously planned concession for small cars in upcoming fuel-efficiency rules has been scrapped, after automakers, including Tata Motors and Mahindra &

Mahindra, argued that it would benefit only one company, a government document shows.

A September draft had proposed leniency for petrol cars weighing 909 kg or less — a carve-out widely seen as favouring Maruti Suzuki, which controls 95% of India's small-car market. The Ministry of Power has now removed the exemption and tightened other parameters, increasing pressure on all automakers to ramp up electric and hybrid car sales, according to the latest 41-page draft.

The new rules curb over-compensation for vehicle weight, aim to level the field between light and heavy fleet manufacturers, and are designed to deliver real-world efficiency gains, the document said. It introduces "a substan-

tially steeper reduction pathway" for emissions, it added.

Transport accounts for about 12% of India's energy use and is a major driver of petroleum imports and emissions. Passenger vehicles make up nearly 90% of transport-related emissions, the document says.

Corporate Average Fuel Efficiency norms dictate permissible CO2 emissions across a manufacturer's fleet of cars weighing less than 3,500 kg. Updated every five years, they push automakers towards cleaner technologies.

The new rules will apply from April 2027 for five years and are central to automakers' product and powertrain investment plans. It was not immediately clear when the rules will be finalised. The September draft would have allowed fuel-consumption targets to rise faster with vehicle weight, easing compliance for makers of heavier cars such as Mahindra, Tata and Volkswagen, while tightening demands on lighter-fleet players such as Maruti. The imbalance prompted the carve-out.

DH INTERVIEW

'Customs reforms will make industry more resilient'

The Union Budget 2026-27 has introduced a series of reforms in customs processes and rationalised rates. It comes amid the announcement of free trade deals with multiple countries. Central Board of Indirect Taxes and Customs (CBIC) Chairman **Vivek Chaturvedi**, a 1990-batch officer of the Indian Revenue Service (Customs & Indirect Taxes), has wide experience in various aspects of indirect taxation, especially policy formulation. In a post-Budget interaction with *DH's Gyanendra Keshri*, Chaturvedi says the customs reforms would help improve competitiveness of Indian industry. He also underlines the reforms targeted at making common people's travel easier. *Edited excerpts:*

What is the rationale behind the customs duty changes? How will they impact industries?

The customs duty changes have been done in a calibrated approach. We've looked at specific needs and sectors in criticality. For example, we've provided an exemption for setting up nuclear power plants without any capacity limits. We have provided exemption to capital goods for the manufacture of lithium-ion cells used for battery energy storage systems.

Exemption will be given on import of sodium antimonite, which is used for the manufacture of solar glass. There is a lot for MSMEs. I will give you a small example of an umbrella. MSMEs manufacture umbrellas in the country. There are issues of cheap imports. So we have decided to raise the import duty on umbrellas to Rs 60 per piece or 20% of value, whichever is higher. We've provided customs duty exemptions for inputs that go into the manufacture of shoe upper. On the personal side, we've provided customs duty exemption to 17 drugs for anti-cancer treatment. We have also expanded the list of rare diseases by adding seven more. On the defence side, we've given an exemption to raw materials for the manufacture of parts to go into the maintenance and repair of defence aircraft. All these measures are designed for protection, as well as making the industry resilient and more competitive in the market.

Have the customs reforms been guided by the free

trade agreements?

Trade deals are double-sided. While we get market access, we also open the market for foreign competition. Free trade agreements basically mean that finished products would come into the Indian market at preferential rates. They will be sold in our market, where the domestic industry is also competing. Our aim is to provide support to the domestic industry, so that it becomes resilient and competitive.

What is the change in import duty on goods imported for personal use?

The tariff rate on all dutiable goods imported for personal use has been reduced to 10%. This will bring more clarity. Personal imports were already at 10%. Earlier, the problem was that gifts attracted a higher rate of 20%. So we have decided to make it simpler. Now, all personal imports, including gifts, will attract 10%. In

addition, there will be 1% social welfare surcharge and also there is 18% IGST (Integrated Goods and Services Tax). The effective rate comes to 30.98%.

What are the changes in baggage rules?

There is a significant increase in the limit for duty-free import by passengers. Baggage Rules, 2026, has been notified. It has changed after 10 years. Now, resident Indians and people of Indian origin can bring goods worth up to Rs 75,000, without paying any duty. Earlier, this limit was Rs 50,000. For tourists of foreign origin, this limit has been increased from Rs 15,000 to Rs 25,000. There is also a significant change in the import of jewellery. Indian nationals, having stayed for a minimum of one year abroad, are allowed to bring jewellery weighing up to 40 grams (women) and 20 grams (others). Earlier, in addition to the weight limit, there was also a value limit. The value was a matter of interpretation and used to cause inconvenience. Now, we have decided to do away with the value limit.

Do gold and silver bullion also fall under the Rs 75,000 limit?

Jewellery is included, but not

bullion. Gold and silver bars aren't allowed to be imported by individual travellers. However, Indian nationals staying abroad for more than six months can bring up to 1 kg gold and up to 10 kg silver, subject to payment of duty. 5% basic customs duty is charged.

How will the changes in customs rates impact the government's revenue?

Customs reforms are not a revenue measure. It's not a rate rationalisation. It's a measure designed to look at specific needs of the economy and also ease of travel and ease of living. Of course, whenever exemptions happen, it would lead to more imports. We hope that the industry will use those inputs to become more competitive. It will be good for the economy. In FY2026-27, the customs revenue is estimated to grow 5% over the revised estimate of 2025-26.

What kind of growth is expected in GST revenue collection?

We are expecting 3.5% growth in the first half of FY27. In the second half, it is estimated at 9.4%. So the average growth in GST revenue in FY27 is estimated at 6.3%. This is healthy growth, given the kind of rate cuts and rationalisation.

BEML logs Q3 net loss of Rs 22 cr

NEW DELHI, PTI: BEML on Friday reported a consolidated loss of Rs 22.38 crore for the quarter ended December 31, 2025, on account of higher expenses. However, the company had reported a consoli-

dated profit of Rs 24.41 crore in the year-ago period.

Its consolidated income for the December quarter rose to Rs 1,087.13 crore over Rs 880.28 crore in the year-ago period, BEML said.



Located on the Assam-Meghalaya border, Byrnihat was once a sleepy town with clear skies, clean water, and lush green farms. Today, it is choking on smoke. **Sumir Karmakar** visits the town labelled India's most polluted twice and the world's most polluted once

It was a sunny morning when I set out from Guwahati for Byrnihat. A day earlier, a local contact had warned me, “Don’t forget to wear a mask. The pollution is high.” But I was wearing a full-face helmet and felt that was enough.

Traffic was light as I cruised along National Highway 2 on my scooter. After about 20 km, I reached Jorabat, a T-junction connecting Guwahati and Nagaon in Assam with Shillong in neighbouring Meghalaya. Turning right, I continued towards the 13th Mile area. By now, the scenic beauty of the hill state had given way to an industrial sprawl — the visibility was hazy, and the smell more acrid. Dark clouds of smoke hung over the distant hills, while trucks lined both sides of the highway. “Trucks aren’t allowed to run during the daytime as they cause congestion in and around Shillong,” a driver told me. A few kilometres ahead, the air grew heavy with the stench of burnt material, and plumes of smoke billowed from the tall chimneys of factories. I knew I had arrived at Byrnihat.

In 2023, and again last year, Bengaluru’s Centre for Research on Energy and Clean Air (CREA) ranked Byrnihat as India’s most polluted place. In 2024, Switzerland-based IQAir went further, declaring it the world’s most polluted, surpassing traditionally notorious cities like Lahore in Pakistan, Hotan in China, and our national capital, New Delhi.

PM2.5 refers to very fine particles that can penetrate deep into the lungs and harm health. Under the National Ambient Air Quality Standards, the daily average limit is 60 µg/m³, and levels above this are considered unsafe. According to CREA’s 2025 report, Byrnihat exceeded this limit on 278 of the 356 days monitored. That year, the town recorded 13 days of severe pollution, 30 days of very poor air, 160 days of moderate pollution, and only 78 days of satisfactory air quality. Its annual average PM2.5 concentration reached 100 µg/m³, exceeding the levels in Delhi (96 µg/m³) and Ghaziabad, Uttar Pradesh (93 µg/m³).

The ‘most polluted’ tag has triggered a blame game between Assam and Meghalaya. Byrnihat falls on their border. National Highway 6, which connects Jorabat in Guwahati with Shillong, cuts through the town. On the Assam side, it is called Barnihat and in Meghalaya, it is known as the greater Byrnihat. The poor air quality is disrupting daily life and threatening generational livelihood in this semi-urban industrial hub. Tourists who visit Meghalaya to catch a breath of crisp mountain air have to

6 hours

in India’s most polluted place

(...it’s not Delhi)

first contend with the smog of Byrnihat, the state’s main entry point. They drive past without stopping, keeping the windows of their vehicles rolled up at all times.

Going downhill

“Hope you can feel the smoke in the air. We grapple with breathing problems round the year, but it gets severe during winter,” Margaret Shullai, a local, told me when I reached the town of about 40,000 people in mid-January. I learned that falling temperatures create a low-pressure zone, while the hills surrounding the town trap pollutants, preventing them from dispersing.

But Manoj Kumar, lead author of CREA’s 2025 report and an air pollution analyst, says Byrnihat’s pollution crisis is not just seasonal. “Persistently high concentrations point to continuous emissions from industrial activity and vehicular traffic, rather than episodic events alone,” he explains. The town is home to

nearly 100 industrial units on both sides, mostly coke and cement plants. Every day, more than 1,000 trucks ferry raw materials to these factories, and a similar number of tourist vehicles cross the highway.

According to Bijoy Rahang, secretary of a local NGO, Byrnihat was once a sleepy town, with green fields, clear skies, and clean water. That started changing in the mid-1990s when industries began arriving. “All those were paddy and corn fields. There were also many orange orchards,” said the 52-year-old, pointing to a factory nearby. The town is home to tribal communities such as the Karbi, Khasi, and Garo, and most of the land is reserved for them, with outsiders allowed only to lease land. “The land was given to the industries in exchange for money,” Rahang explained. Industries were drawn to Byrnihat for two main reasons. Meghalaya has rich reserves of limestone and coal, which are raw materials for cement and coke plants, while Byrnihat offers good highway connectivity to transport goods. The next wave of industrial push came in 2007 when the Centre offered incentives.

Today, rooftops and tree leaves covered in soot are a common sight. “We have been living with pollution for a long time, but it got everybody’s attention only after reports named Byrnihat the most polluted town,” rued Rahang, who’s from the Karbi tribe.

No public advisory

Some steps have been taken to tackle pollution, but wherever I went, the plea “The government must do something” kept coming up.

Around 2.30 pm, I saw a group of

children returning from school. One pinched his nose to block out the stench. None wore masks. There are no banners or posters around the town advising people on how to survive air pollution. “Masks may help if the problem lasts a few days or weeks. It’s not possible to wear them all the time,” said Suraj Sharma, a BA student who travels 20 km to Dispur in Guwahati for college. “I don’t feel like coming back home because of the pollution here,” he said, waiting for a vehicle to reach his college.

“Children and elders are suffering the most,” complained Marak, a farmer, pointing to thick smoke spewing from the chimneys of three factories barely 500 metres from his home. Augustine Sangma, another farmer, agreed. “My children can’t sleep at night. Their eyes burn, and they struggle to breathe because of the constant smoke,” said the father of five children, aged between two and 14.

A visit to Byrnihat Public Health Centre, the only government hospital in the area, revealed the scale of the public health crisis. A motley crowd of patients, some wearing masks, waited outside a doctor’s chamber. Many complained of breathing difficulties and asthma.

Byrnihat’s notorious pollution has become a matter of shame for the two states, and public servants are wary of speaking to the media. A doctor, speaking anonymously, said respiratory diseases are now common in almost every family, primarily due to high levels of air pollution. “We see at least 15 to 20 such patients every day,” he said. Skin disease is another big concern. He fears it is caused by industrial effluents contaminating the streams that run through the town. Some residents, including children, still use these streams for bathing and washing clothes.

Livelihoods hit

Cultivation of betel nuts and betel leaves is a major source of livelihood in and around Byrnihat. I passed many withered betel nut trees, while the surviving ones had leaves coated in thick layers of soot. “Betel leaves get damaged because

of pollution. Production is falling, and we are facing losses,” said Sangma.

Vegetable and fruit yields are also falling. Sangma led me around his farm and stopped at a patch of potatoes to show me how slowly they were growing. “Very few orange and pineapple trees are left in our orchards. The fruits simply don’t grow in this polluted air,” he said.

Prabal Saikia, a chief scientist at the zonal station of Assam Agriculture University, Lakhimpur, says air pollution interferes with photosynthesis, stunting plant growth and reducing yields. “It also causes soil toxicity when particles settle on the ground due to rain or fog,” he says.

As the town underwent industrialisation, many residents abandoned generational farming to work as labourers and supervisors in the factories. “Locals do the lower-level work such as loading, unloading and packing, while managers and senior staff come from outside. Most of them don’t even live here because of the air pollution. They commute daily from Guwahati,” said Biju Das, a resident of Tamulikuchi.

And some, like Sanjukta Debnath, a public sector bank employee, recently took a transfer from Byrnihat to Beltola in Guwahati, about 12 km away, to escape the pollution. “Many others in our branch have been trying for a transfer too. They fear it will impact their health,” she says.

Now, as these industries come under scrutiny and face possible closure, Byrnihat’s residents are caught in a dilemma. “People have lost their land and now depend on these factories for livelihood. Some residents are already unemployed after the coke plants closed following crackdowns by pollution control boards. Assam and Meghalaya must come up with a joint action plan to tackle pollution instead of shutting down industries,” Das said.

Political slugfest

In some sense, the story of Byrnihat is not unique. It reflects a pattern seen across many industrial towns in India. Factories in people’s backyards fuel the nation’s economy, producing cement, steel, iron, and more, yet the local community pays the price. The promise of jobs and better lives often gives way to choking air, contaminated rivers, and an uncertain future.

“You talk about Delhi, but not Byrnihat. Is it because we are far from the ‘mainland?’” a school teacher asked, criticising the media’s skewed coverage of the country’s pollution crisis.

After Byrnihat started topping the pollution rankings, both the Assam and Meghalaya governments came under heavy criticism and took some action.

An official from the Assam State Pollution Control Board said at least 15 industrial units on the Assam side have

closed, reducing the number to 40 now. Yet 17 to 18 red category units — industries with the highest pollution potential — remain operational. On the Meghalaya side, R Nainamalai, chairman of the state pollution board, said levels have dropped to moderate after the closure of several red category units. But for locals, little has changed. Iron and steel factories, along with breweries, continue to operate intermittently, spewing smoke into the air.

The Assam official, however, insisted that industries are not the main culprit; vehicular traffic is. “Trucks are not allowed to run during the day in Shillong, so they all run at night. This causes sharp spikes in pollution within a short window,” he explained. He also questioned Byrnihat’s ranking as the most polluted town. “Many other towns have higher pollution, but their ambient air quality is not monitored properly. If it were, Byrnihat would not come close in comparison,” he said. The state of denial runs through Meghalaya’s top leadership too. Last year, Chief Minister Conrad K Sangma said, “The high pollution levels cited are on the Assam side, while air monitoring equipment on our side shows moderate or satisfactory levels.”

While the authorities claim they are taking action, residents remain unconvinced. “We don’t feel any change in pollution levels. Some factories that appear closed during the day operate at night, while others have simply shifted to the Assam side,” said Mahananda Goyari, president of the Byrnihat-Tamulikuchi Market Development Society, who lives on the Assam side of Byrnihat. His neighbour, Amarendra Das, who is in his 80s, has been frequently suffering from coughs and colds, and he is sure it is “because of air pollution”. His daughter-in-law, Shrutimala, adds, “We can’t dry clothes outside. They get dirty because of the soot.”

Pollution control boards in both states have installed Continuous Air Ambient Quality Monitoring Systems. Yet, during my visit, one device inside a horticulture campus on the Meghalaya side was not working. “It remains non-operational most of the time,” a shopkeeper across the road said. However, a device installed a few kilometres ahead, in Assam, was functioning and it showed moderate pollution levels. But even a report by the Meghalaya government admits that moderate pollution may cause discomfort for people with heart or lung disease.

After spending six hours in Byrnihat, I began feeling dizzy and had a burning sensation in my eyes. On my ride back to Guwahati, I realised why my local contact had insisted I wear a mask along with my helmet.

Like this story? Email: dhonsat@deccanherald.co.in



My children can’t sleep at night. Their eyes burn, and they struggle to breathe due to the constant smoke — **Augustine Sangma**

MUSICANA

Trio fusing classical styles to create new sound

For Kacheri Gang, genres are secondary, writes **Shraddha A K**

It began not with a plan, but with restlessness. “Before how, it was why,” says pianist Hemadri Srinivas, 28, recalling the moment he knew a conventional nine-to-five life wasn’t for him. For drummer Athreya Vishal Kalbag, 29, the realisation was similar: music wasn’t just a career, it was inevitability. For veena exponent Mahesh Prasad, 31, the journey was more circuitous — an MTech degree, a government job, and then the decision to walk away, choosing music over a steady job.

The three had known each other for years, crossing paths at gigs across Bengaluru. But it was a late night in May 2022, after a performance and an impromptu conversation near Shankar-

puram’s Shankar Mutt, that the idea crystallised. Over dinner and coffee, they asked themselves the question that would change their lives: “Why don’t we form a band?” And so, Kacheri Gang was born. They blend Karnatik, Hindustani and western classical styles into a contemporary indie fusion sound. Their musical journey is largely centred on live performances where they reinterpret popular covers in their own style.

The name is a nod to their south Bengaluru upbringing amid classical kacheris (concerts), paired with the easy camaraderie of a “gang”. Prasad, steeped in Karnatik tradition, has played the veena for films including ‘KGF’. Kalban, trained in Hindustani music as

a tabla player, expanded into drums and multi-instrumental explorations. Srinivas, a western classical pianist, honed his craft at A R Rahman’s K M Conservatory in Chennai and continues his pursuit of London College of Music grades.

Their rehearsals are less about rigid structures and more about exchange. A melodic idea from Srinivas might find fuller expression through Prasad’s veena; a rhythmic concept rooted in Kalban’s tabla training might morph into something unexpected on drums. “We never stick to the plan on stage,” they admit. Cue points are fixed, but the rest is instinct. Concerts often reshape themselves mid-performance — sometimes to the mock frustration of bandmates — but

always in pursuit of something alive.

At the heart of their evolving sound is experimentation. Prasad now wields what they believe is Karnataka’s first electric veena — compact, mobile, and liberating. On stage, he moves like a guitarist, pushing the instrument beyond its traditional frame. The next chapter is already in motion. Kacheri Gang is working toward their first original album, ‘Praaram’ — meaning “beginning”. Slated for the later half of 2026, it promises an indie sensibility while blending Karnatik textures, Hindustani rhythms, and western harmonies. Genres, they insist, are secondary. “We don’t decide what the music should be. The composition will ask for what it wants,” says Srinivas.



Kacheri Gang was formed in 2022.



Faithful furry friends

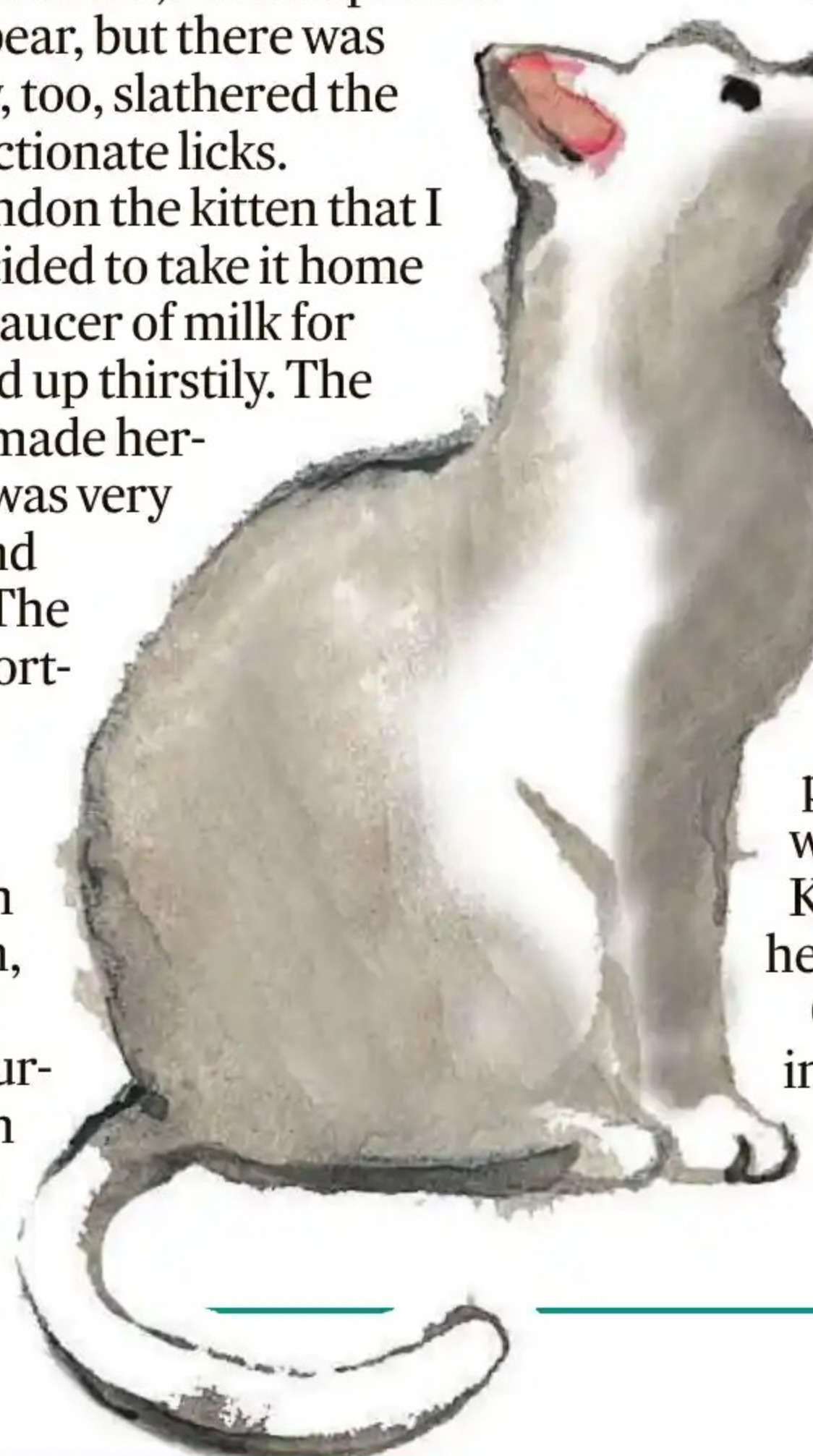
Ashrafi Antia writes about a heartwarming tale of loyalty, care and companionship between a golden retriever and a tabby cat

One evening, whilst I was walking my dog Sonny, he stopped under a tree in the park and kept barking. When I called to him, he refused to come, straining at the leash, planting his feet, and refusing to budge. He kept looking up into the tree and then at me, barking incessantly. This was rather unusual behaviour, as Sonny was an obedient, well-behaved dog.

“What’s the matter, boy?” I asked, peering up into the tree. “What’s up there?” That’s when I heard a soft mew. Shading my eyes from the glare of the setting sun, I scanned the leafy canopy of the banyan tree and spied a frightened little kitten clinging to a branch for dear life. The tiny tabby cat’s grey coat was camouflaged against the greyish-brown

bark of the tree. “Don’t worry, little kitty,” I called up reassuringly. “I’ll get you down from there.” Climbing the tree, I managed to rescue the helpless little kitten. It was trembling in fright. I petted the tiny furball soothingly. Looking around, I half expected to see its mother appear, but there was no sign of her. Sonny, too, slathered the little kitten with affectionate licks.

I couldn’t just abandon the kitten that I had rescued, so I decided to take it home with me. I put out a saucer of milk for her, which she lapped up thirstily. The little tabby cat soon made herself at home. Sonny was very protective, loving, and caring towards her. The kitten, too, felt comfortable with Sonny and grew quite attached to him. Sonny, our golden retriever with his sunny disposition, used to take his toys to the kitty to play. Surprisingly, Sonny even allowed the kitten to



share his bed. They slept there, cuddled up together.

Mum said, “Don’t get too attached to the pussycat. Someone may come looking for it.” We were not allowed to name her, so we referred to her as Kitty. “Here, Kitty, Kitty,” we used to call, and the name ‘Kitty’ just stuck.

Sonny was careful to teach Kitty to stay out of Grandma’s way, in case she tripped over either of them. If Grandma dropped her stick, Sonny would pick it up and hand it to her. He was a caring, responsible dog.

One day, it was pouring with rain. When we called Kitty for lunch, she was nowhere to be found. “Where’s Kitty?” I asked Sonny. He ran out of the house into the pouring rain and returned after an hour, drenched, but leading the lost, bedraggled kitten home. “That’s the second time you’ve rescued her,” I told Sonny, patting him on the head whilst he wagged his wet tail. “No wonder Kitty adores you and looks on you as her saviour,” I said.

Our two furry pets became inseparable from that day on. It was as if Sonny was saying, “I’m not letting

you out of my sight, you naughty Kitty,” and she followed him wherever he went.

When my cousin Simi came to visit us from England, she brought her six-month-old baby, Natasha, with her. Everyone fussed over the little one, who was the centre of our attention. We used to gather around her pram, trying to make her smile, cooing and making silly faces to grab her attention.

One day, Simi wanted to take baby Natasha out for a stroll in her pram. Of course, Sonny and Kitty followed. Catch them missing a chance for a walk! Just as

they stepped out of the front door, Simi’s mobile phone rang, and she realised she had left it in the dining room. She ran in to fetch it, leaving the pram unattended in our driveway. She didn’t realise that our driveway sloped downwards to the compound gate.

The pram started rolling, gaining momentum as it rolled down the driveway with baby Natasha in it. Intelligent Sonny realised something was wrong and that this was dangerous. He raced in front of the pram, stopping it first with his body and then by putting his paws on its wheels. In the meantime, Kitty raced to the kitchen and raised the alarm by meowing loudly and tugging at Mum’s flared pants, which she would normally only brush against.

Mum came rushing out to see Sonny preventing the pram from rolling away. “Great teamwork, guys!” she called, putting the brakes on the pram and hugging both Sonny and Kitty. That evening, the two friends got a special treat for saving the day and baby Natasha.

When Sonny grew old, he developed cataracts in his eyes and couldn’t see very well. We put a ghungroo (bell) on Kitty’s collar. Sonny would follow her around by listening to the tinkling of the bell. It was a case of reversal of roles. Now it was Kitty’s turn to take care of Sonny, and she did so by helping him avoid bumping into people and furniture. They always remained together, forever faithful furry friends.



experiments using water

... and a few kitchen items

Magic pepper run

Materials needed
■ A shallow bowl or plate

Water
■ Black pepper (or chilli powder)
■ Liquid dish soap
■ A cotton bud

Method
1) Fill the bowl with water.
2) Sprinkle pepper or chilli powder evenly on the water surface. It should float.
3) Touch the water with a clean cotton bud or finger first. You can also wear a clean kitchen glove and do these steps. You will notice that nothing will happen.
4) Now put a drop of dish soap on the cotton bud or finger. Touch the centre of the water gently with the soapy bud



or finger.
5) You will notice that the pepper “runs away” to the sides of the bowl.

What happens?
Water has something called surface tension, which acts like a thin skin on its top. Pepper floats on this ‘skin’, but when the soap touches the water, the surface tension weakens and pulls the pepper away.

Walking water

Materials needed
■ 5 clear cups or glasses
■ Water
■ Food colouring (3 colours)
■ Paper towels

Method
1) Arrange cups in a line.
2) Fill every alternate cup with water (1st, 3rd, and 5th).
3) Add different food colours to each filled cup, such as red, yellow, blue.
4) Fold paper towels into long strips.
5) Place one end of a paper towel in

coloured water and the other end in the empty cup next to it.
6) Do this between all cups. Wait for 1 to 3 hours.
7) You will observe that the water slowly travels up the paper towel, and drips into the empty cup. The colours mix in the empty cups and create new colours like orange and green.

What happens?
Water slowly travels up the paper towel because of capillary action. Paper towels have tiny holes, which makes water move through these tiny spaces.



ART CORNER

Love painting?

Want to showcase your flair for colours? Send your paintings on the theme ‘Love in bloom’ to [Open Sesame](mailto:opensesame@deccanherald.co.in) and stand a chance to get featured in an upcoming edition. Mail photographs of your work to opensesame@deccanherald.co.in. Open to children below 16 years. Don’t forget to mention your name, age, and city. And send us a recent photograph of yourself. Entries close on February 12.



undaunted

(adjective)
— determined and enthusiastic, despite problems or no success

Usage:
— Undaunted by the cold and the rain, people danced until 2 am.
— Pranu stayed undaunted, facing every challenge with courage and resolve.

Word of the Week



To the special people in my life...

Open Sesame readers write poetry about those who matter the most



My guiding lights

One of the special people in my life is my mother. My mother shares my pain, my happiness, my everything. She loves me and takes care of me, expecting nothing in return. My mother is everything to me, and her name is Amulya. Another special person in my life is my brother, He has brought heaven down for me, My brother has brought lost happiness back into my life, He is the one I love the most, and his name is Vedang. Another special person in my life is my grandfather, He guides me in everything and shows me the path of life, He plays with me like a friend and teaches me like a teacher, He guides me like a father, and his name is Chandramouli.

— SOHAN GOWDA, 13, Mangaluru, Karnataka



For my parents

My mother is my world, She is my real gold. My mother is the best, She never takes rest. My mother teaches me at night, And makes my future bright. My father is the son of the soil, He works hard on the farm and toils. I love my dad, He makes me glad!

— BHUVAN A, 12, Bengaluru, Karnataka



The special one

We all know you are a star, But did I mention who guided me this far? I did this much without any fear, Because you were always near. You are the person who built a fort, Strong and safe, my best support. Maa, who should I call special, if not you? Kind, helpful, and always true. You helped me learn from my mistakes each day, You helped me know who I am along the way. The kindest and sweetest cherry on the tree is you, The most unique person in my life is you.

— AVYAKTA B R, 11, Bengaluru, Karnataka



To them...

To those who don’t turn away, When I’m brutally wrong. To those who fight for me, When I’m too drained to be strong. To those who want to listen, When thoughts burst in my head. To those who catch my look, And feel all things unsaid. To those who are present, When I need them the most. And to those who raised me, When I was hopelessly lost.

— MEHREEN M, 15, Bengaluru, Karnataka



My family

My grandma tells stories every night, They make my dreams happy and bright. My father is strong and kind to me, He helps me learn and helps me see. My mother’s smile warms my day, She hugs my worries all away. My aunt makes me laugh and play, She turns dull moments bright and gay. My baby sister is small and sweet, With tiny hands and dancing feet.

— RIDDHISHA PATIL, 9, Belagavi, Karnataka



LET’S DEBATE!

Want to take part in the upcoming *Open Sesame* debate? Share your thoughts in a crisp 200-word essay on the topic ‘Should exams be replaced with project-based assessments?’. Mail your works to opensesame@deccanherald.co.in. Entries close on February 19. Open to children below 16 years. Don’t forget to mention your name, age, school, and city. And send us a recent photograph.

This Week:

February facts



Take the fun Open Sesame quiz, and stand a chance to win gift vouchers worth Rs 500. Open to children below 16 years.

Q1

On February 3, 1943, the Howrah Bridge, over the Hooghly River, was inaugurated and opened to the public. What was that iconic landmark in Kolkata (then Calcutta) renamed, several years later?

Q2

Born on February 7, 1812, Charles Dickens wrote the novel, ‘A Tale of Two Cities’, in 1859. One of the titular cities is London. Which is the other?

Q3

On February 28, 1986, PM Olaf Palme was gunned down in Stockholm, the first Swedish national leader to be killed in 200 years. Who was assassinated in 1792?

Scan the QR code
Or visit bit.ly/DHopensesame to participate in the quiz.



Q5

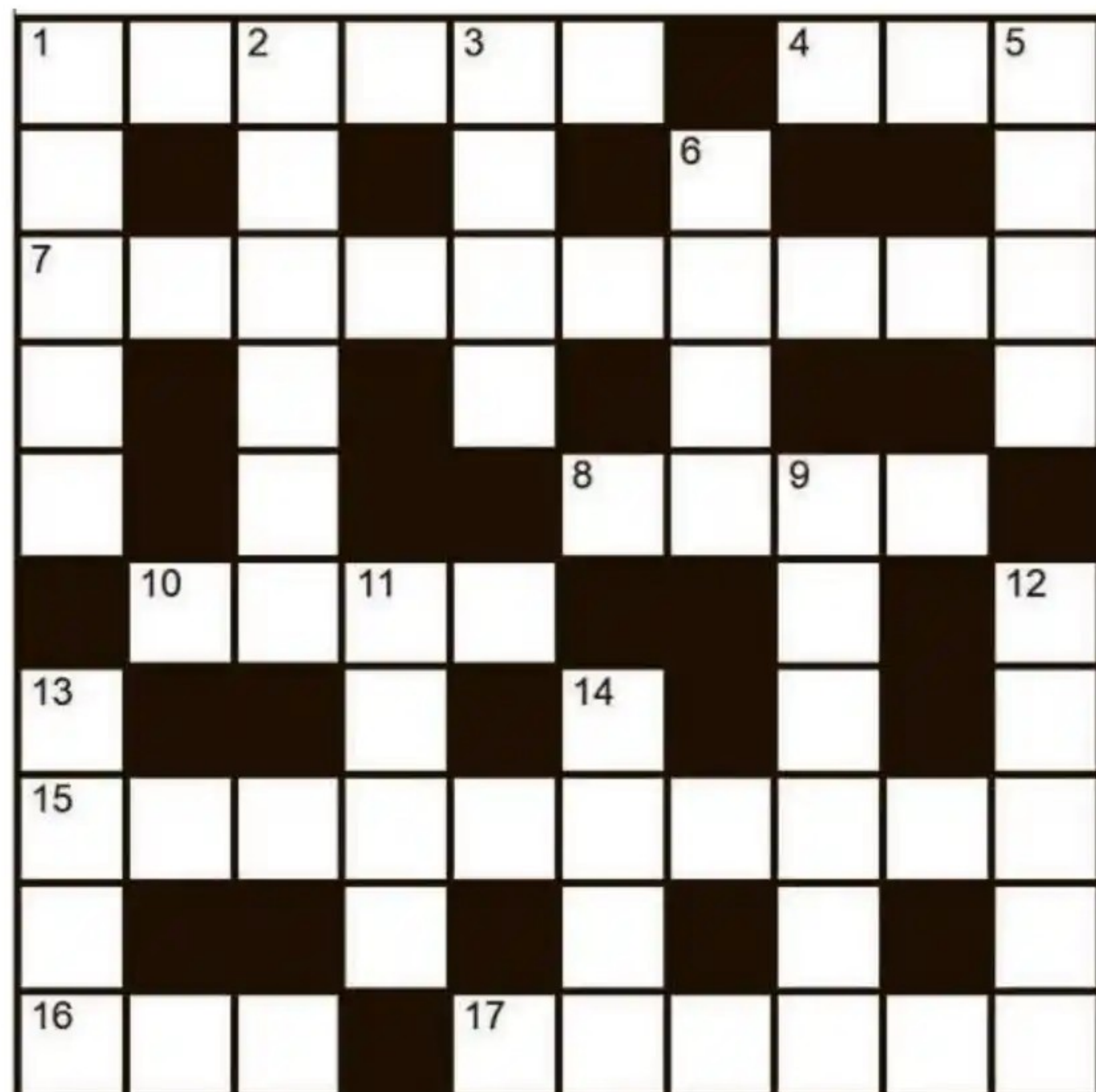
Clue Cluster: Who walked out of prison, after 27 years, on February 11, 1990? Use these clues.
a) Robben Island
b) President
c) F W de Klerk
d) Winnie

Q4

15, 1564, Galileo was born in —
Clue B: Permit to enter a specific country.

LAST WEEK’S WINNERS: Atharv Sushant (12), Bengaluru; Hayden P Viegas (10), Belagavi; Aldin Kumar (14), Bengaluru.
Answers to last week’s quiz: A1: Grévy’s zebra; A2: Dazzle; A3: Burchell’s zebra; A4: Marty/Party; A5: Botswana.

CROSSWORD



BY CHITTARANJAN ANDRADE

Across	Down
1 Move like a duck (6)	1 Bet (5)
4 Armed conflict (3)	2 Heavy rainfall (6)
7 Girl who met the three bears (10)	3 Animal’s den (4)
8 Means of water transport (4)	5 Move hurriedly (4)
10 Sudden tug (4)	6 Sport played on horseback (4)
15 Animal whom Red Riding Hood met (3,3,4)	9 From one side to the other (6)
16 Word of assent (3)	11 Long, flowing garment (4)
17 Vomiting sensation (6)	12 Italian criminal organisation (5)
	13 Follow orders (4)
	14 Clever thought (4)

ANSWERS
Across: 1 Waddle, 4 War, 7 Colibri, 8 Boat, 10 Jerk, 15 Big bad wolf, 16 Yes, 17 Nausea.
Down: 1 Wager, 2 Deluge, 3 Liar, 5 Rush, 6 Polo, 9 Across, 11 Robe, 12 Mafia, 13 Obe, 14 Idea.

No AI can replace a filmmaker's vision: Prasanna Vithanage

The Sri Lankan filmmaker, known for his intense socio-politican drama ‘Paradise’, speaks to **Pranati A S** at BIFFes, which concluded yesterday

Veteran Sri Lankan filmmaker Prasanna Vithanage, who has made classics like ‘Akasa Kusum’, ‘Anantha Rathriya’, ‘Ira Madiyama’ and ‘Oba Nathuwa Oba Ekka’ was at the 17th Bengaluru International Film Festival (BIFFes) as the jury member of the Asian Cinema competition.

Vithanage, whose recent film ‘Paradise’ was a hit in India, has had a warm relationship with the country over the years. He has collaborated with Indian filmmakers and actors. Veteran editor Sreekar Prasad has also produced some of his films.

He recalls he is named after the Indian spin bowler Erapalli Prasanna who is from Bengaluru. “My father was a fan of cricket and admired the doyen,” he told Showtime.

In a conversation, he speaks about his experience at BIFFes and the advancement of technology and its effects on cinema.

Excerpts:

How was your experience at the Bengaluru festival?
The festival was excellent. They had a wonderful collection of films — African cinema, Polish cinema... I was able to see Andrzej Wajda’s classics — which I had watched on VCR and DVD back in the day — on the big screen.

But the festival has some challenges. In India, the festival season begins with IFFI and most Indian filmmakers want to have their film at least in the panorama category if not in the competition. After IFFI comes West Bengal, Kerala, Pune and then Bengaluru. The best of the Indian films have already had their premieres. So it is a challenge for BIFFes to get Indian films exclusively for the festival. It is the same with Asian films as well. But BIFFes excels in the selection of films and the screening facilities. They have carefully curated sections and they have brought the best crop of 2025.

And as a jury member?
The decisions were all unanimous, we were all on the same page about the movies. There were no heated arguments and we had a good deliberation. I enjoyed the process.

How have films changed over the years?
Although there are economic challenges, today, making a film is not difficult. They are also shot on iPhone. That freedom has made a big difference.

In the still-male-dominated industry, we’re seeing female intervention. They are bringing personal subjects — questions of

identity, of being a woman — which were rarely explored earlier. I’m happy that women filmmakers are in focus at BIFFes this year.

While filmmaking has become comparatively easier, distribution and release are challenging. Cinema has become a game of numbers. For many indie filmmakers across the world, these are difficult times. That is why we need festivals. Earlier, people were interested in what a filmmaker was saying. Now it’s about how much money a film collects. Even young filmmakers feel the pressure.

It is understandable. But the real challenge is how to reach the audience without compromising on expression.

initially felt like a big opportunity, especially during Covid-19 pandemic. We saw many interesting explorations. But now it’s becoming a factory. Writers work in teams, not always to express an idea, but to keep the viewer hooked. Every five or ten minutes there is a plot point.

It has also made audiences watch films on phones, at home, and while travelling. This has affected cinematography. Use of silence, shadow, and atmosphere to create mood is a thing of the past now. But cinema is a visual medium. In life, we don’t always express everything with words, we communicate through looks, emotions, and pauses.

films better? Films and series have become more generic.

But AI is a reality. I’m not saying it has to be completely avoided. Filmmakers can use it for certain things, like understanding character development when working on a screenplay. It can be helpful for young filmmakers to sharpen a synopsis or clarify structure. But ultimately, they have to trust their intuition. The thinking has to come from within.

No AI can replace a filmmaker’s vision.

You have been watching and making films for so long now. What does cinema mean to you today?
Cinema remains the same for me as it did when I was a schoolboy. The wonder that the images brought, the power of the images and the effect it had on me — it has remained the same. So even after being here for so long, I have not become cynical. *(Read full interview online)*



Prasanna Vithanage
IMDB PHOTO

Not a final goodbye, or is it, Arijit Singh?

The film industry is shocked by his decision to retire from playback singing, writes **Roshmila Bhattacharya**



Arijit Singh

Arijit Singh’s decision to step back from playback singing after wrapping up his current commitments has sent shockwaves through the Hindi film industry. While Aamir Khan made a flying visit — literally, since he was spotted flying kites — to the singer’s residence in Jiaganj, West Bengal, Lalit Pandit, speaking from Rome while on a family vacation, hopes the retirement is a sabbatical and not permanent.

Arijit recorded his first song in the studio for Lalit when Ramesh Taurani of Tips Music signed the 17-year-old teenager, along with two other participants of the 2005 reality show ‘Fame Gurukul’, for a six-song album. “All three — Arijit, Shamit Tyagi and Mona Bhatt — were very good, but Arijit was so well-rehearsed that I didn’t have to pay any attention to him when he was dubbing,” recalls the composer.

Unfortunately, the album was never released, neither was his ‘Yun shabnam’ for Sanjay Leela Bhansali’s ‘Saawariya’. Arijit was voted out of ‘Fame Gurukul’ following a controversy, but the following year, he aced ‘10

Ke 10 Le Gaye Dil’, a musical showdown featuring winners and top contestants from multiple reality shows, and subsequently moved to Mumbai.

He made his playback debut with ‘Phir mohabbat’ for the 2011 thriller, ‘Murder 2’, followed by songs for ‘Agent Vinod’, ‘Cocktail’, ‘Players’ and ‘Barfi’. The breakthrough came in 2013, with ‘Aashiqui 2’’s ‘Tum hi ho’, and since then there has been no looking back for the ‘Channa meriya’ and ‘Kesariya’ singer.

Lalit, who split with brother Jatin after they bagged an award for ‘Fanaa’, admits that while there are no parallels here, he is very surprised by Arijit’s premature call. Remembering how the singer added so much to his compositions, he says, “It is said that you don’t leave this industry, the industry leaves you and he is at his peak. Music is a gift of god and Arijit is a god-gifted singer. His exit will be a huge blow to the industry.”

Nikkhil Advani, whose favourite Arijit song is ‘Soch na sake’ from ‘Airlift’, agrees, reiterating that he seems to have god’s hand

for other avenues to get energy and inspiration, and once he finds that with the film he wants to make, I hope he will come back.”

Arijit has assured his fans that he will continue making music. This would mean independent music via his channel and live performances. Lalit believes that it’s a good trend that indie music, which is thriving in the West, is catching on here. It is giving singers IP rights to their music. But he also reminds that when Shah Rukh Khan sings a ‘Gerua’ or ‘Haawaayein’ on screen, it is heard by millions across the world as compared to private songs.

The music director acknowledges that Arijit was always different, staying away from Mumbai and even award shows, untouched by glamour. He was not even enamoured by the money that anchors many to the industry. Simple and spiritually inclined, the singer may believe he has reached saturation point as far as film songs go, and wants to leave the field open to new voices, but Lalit hopes he will reconsider his decision. “I’ve seen many great artists being replaced, there is so much talent in Mumbai and the film industry is quick to forget. But my heart tells me Arijit will be back,” he says fervently.



Fans resonated with Arijit’s popular song from ‘Ae Dil Hai Mushkil’: ‘Achha chalta hu duaan mein yaad rakhna’ (Goodbye. Keep me in your prayers).

on his head, and his exit will be a huge blow to music in general. The filmmaker shares that composer Shankar Mahadevan still reminds him how he replaced Arijit when he got the young singer to sing ‘Ya rabba’ for his 2007 film ‘Salaam-e-Ishq’ because he wanted that Sufi quality that Kailash Kher brought to the

(The author is a senior journalist)

MOVIE R | E | V | I | E | W | S

A tender exploration of queer love

ANGEL RANI



Sabar Bonda

Marathi (Netflix)

Director: Rohan Kanawade

Cast: Bhushaan Manoj, Suraaj Suman, Jayshri Jagtap



Bhushaan Manoj and Suraaj Suman play a queer couple.

‘Sabar Bonda’ opens in the sterile corridors of a Mumbai hospital, where Anand (Bhushaan Manoj) mourns his father. Words are sparse as he and his mother (Jayshri Jagtap) take the body to their ancestral village for the 10-day ritual.

Grief is quickly overshadowed by protocol. Relatives and neighbours rush to recite the rules of mourning — no footwear, no milk, no temple visits. Anand is told off for wearing black. It’s grey, he protests, but a shirt change is inevitable. And he braces himself for what he believes will be the longest 10 days of his life — an ordeal of nosy relatives, pitying villagers and unsolicited matchmaking for the “quite old” 30-year-old.

But what we are not

prepared for is the lyrical unfolding of a different queer love story, as Anand reunites with his childhood friend Balya (Suraaj Suman).

The two men slowly reconnect, finding comfort in their shared feelings with a smoke on the terrace. There is no urgency, no overt display of emotion. Just two men in love, stealing glances, one gently stroking the other’s curly mop upon discovering strands of grey.

The film draws parallels between forbidden love and

the forbidden fruit, ‘sabar bonda’ (cactus pears), which Balya leaves with Anand’s family as a ‘surprise’ for him.

There are no prying eyes or dramatic revelations as the lovers find moments of union under the shade of trees, amid cattle herding. Perhaps a quiet echo of ‘Brokeback Mountain’.

There are no passionate declarations in this rural gay love, where feelings are

neatly bottled in a shampoo one buys for the other, or carried as music through their shared headphones.

During one of their rendezvous, Balya tells Anand that there are “others like us” in the village too, but they “just do it and leave”.

Rohan Kanawade’s portrayal of homosexuality lingers precisely because it is the opposite — unhurried and quietly enduring.

Ambitious mystery drama lost in chaos

JAGADISH ANGADI



Gharga

Kannada (Theatres)

Director: M Shashidhar

Cast: Arun Ramprasad, Saikumar, Arun Sagar, Rihana Sheik



Saikumar in ‘Gharga’.

Producer of ‘Jogi’ launches his son Arun Ramprasad with his latest ‘Gharga’. The film opens with Sampath Raj narrating the story of Gharga, a place so terrifying that no one dares to enter.

Vikram Adiga (Ramprasad), a researcher, sets out to explore Gharga. On the way, Adiga is attacked by a gang and is forced to take refuge at the home of Gajanana Aithal’s (Saikumar), who is deeply superstitious. Adiga tells Gajanana that he is researching the reasons behind the sudden death of his father, earning Gajanana’s trust.

Circumstances reveal Adiga’s identity. He is actually Aryan, a gangster tasked with stealing a sacred Linga installed by the Aithal family. Aryan makes attempts to uncover the location of the Linga, but Gajanana refuses to reveal its whereabouts. Why is the Linga so valuable to the Aithals? What motivates Aryan to steal it? Does he succeed? Some of these questions are answered, while others are left open, with the filmmaker indicating that the story will continue.

Director Shashidhar falters on multiple fronts. The narrative lacks suspense

and thrills, and the inclusion of Aghoris feels forced and does not add to the plot. Several scenes defy logic and there is no justification for portraying characters as habitual cigar smokers. Fearsome gangsters come across as caricatured rather than intimidating.

Excessive sound levels, subpar music, low quality CGI, and below average cinematography further add to the discomfort.

Saikumar and Arun Sagar perform with ease. Arun Ramprasad lacks adequate screen presence. His acting leaves little to note. Rihana is confined to a glamour role.

Technically slick but tropes all the way

PRANATI A S



Surya Prakhayath



JC University

Kannada (Theatres)

Director: Chethan Jayram

Cast: Surya Prakhayath, Rangayana Raghu, Thriller Manju, Bhavana S Reddy

Daali Dhananjaya’s fifth film as producer, ‘JC University’, tries to show the downside of the police system, but the film gets trapped in clichés.

‘JC University’, short for Judicial Custody University, runs on the philosophy that the jail is a place of learning. The movie opens with the murder of a notorious rowdy. The first half traces who killed him and the second half is a predictable chase between two rival gangs.

Madhu alias Maddy (Surya Prakhayath), a college student, gets entangled with local rowdies and soon becomes the most wanted criminal in town. Running parallel to this is the story of his family, friends and girlfriend who are trying to pull him back onto the right path. Inspired by several movies, his father (Rangayana Raghu) succeeds in reforming him. Yet you find it hard to be moved by his story. The narrative is largely driven by Madhu’s ego and thirst for revenge.

It is barely socially relevant, and emotionally relatable.

When the protagonist is a gangster, there needs to be a compelling reason for the audience to root for him. Take ‘The Godfather’,

for instance. Movies like ‘Jogi’ work because they are rooted in emotions and tell a larger story about society. Madhu’s journey in ‘JC University’ is erratic and unconvincing.

Then there are the dialogues! The entire film relies heavily on loud, massy one-liners, so ridiculous that they provoke unintentional laughter.

Prakhayath has a great screen presence but still has a long way to go in terms of acting. Rangayana Raghu may be a great actor but his melodrama in this one is unbearable. Technically, the film is great but it does not translate into anything.

Another loud and empty horror flick

NIKKIL WAIKER



Raj B Shetty in the film.



Rakkasapuradhol

Kannada (Theatres)

Director: Ravi Saranga

Cast: Raj B Shetty, Anirudh Bhat, GopalKrishna Deshpande, Jahangir

There has been a fervent drive in the film industry to conjoin thrillers, dramas, and comedies with supernatural stories. Although these films claim a freshness in an industry exhausted by an otherwise star-driven lethargy, the films themselves seem to struggle with a mania of templated storytelling — a trend that has tragically becoming a norm.

Set in a fictional town called Rakkasapura, inspector Shiva (played by Raj Shetty), investigates a series of murders and kidnappings, locally misunderstood as shenanigans of a

kolli devva. Underwhelming performances by the leads are coupled with expositions that lead to nowhere and a dry whodunnit plot. It is made worse with ‘soap opera-esque’ editing and inappreciable character conventions (to a point where Shetty’s character has an immortal plot armour).

The story, possibly written also with the intention of examining Shetty’s character, drops the ball with the staleness of his character.

While hero dramas demand a strong antagonist to derive depth in the protagonist’s role, the passive conflict between Aadi (played

by Anirudh Bhat) and Shiva, bring that into question, too. Shiva’s conflicts with his atheism gets brushed under the rug as the movie progresses, while his personal resolutions, fleshed out weakly throughout the film, see rapid resolutions towards the end. The ending also seemed to be frenzily hinting at a sequel — a trend that is gradually taking over the industry.

Amidst all this, the life and mood that the production design brings seems to be quickly overtaken by the shrill and unnecessary loudness of the background music, while obvious plothes makes the film a very confusing watch.

CRICKET U-19 WORLD CUP

Vaibhav fires India to sixth title

Teenager blazes to 80-ball 175 as Boys in Blue drub England by 100 runs in final

HARARE, PTI

Cricket's latest wonder-kind Vaibhav Sooryavanshi played arguably the most breathtaking knock in the history of U-19 World Cup to fire India to a record-extending sixth title with a 100-run drubbing of England in the summit clash here Friday.

Sooryavanshi's 80-ball 175, which comprised a record 15 sixes and as many fours, propelled India to an imposing 411 for 9 after England opted to bowl first.

Bruised and battered following Sooryavanshi's brutal onslaught, England's innings ended at 311 in 40.2 overs after being set an improbable target of 412 against a well-rounded bowling attack.

India simultaneously hold titles of

Men's T20 World Cup (2024)

ICC Champions Trophy (2025)

Women's ODI World Cup (2025)

Women's U-19 World Cup (2025)

Men's U-19 World Cup (2026)

India's U-19 WC winning captains

2000 - Mohammad Kaif

2008 - Virat Kohli

2012 - Unmukt Chand

2018 - Prithvi Shaw

2022 - Yash Dhull

2026 - Ayush Mhatre



Indian players celebrate with the trophy after winning the ICC U-19 World Cup in Harare on Friday. India defeated England by 100 runs in the final. BCCI

Caleb Falconer top-scored for England with a scintillating 67-ball 115, leaving a lasting impression on the biggest stage while helping his side reduce the margin of defeat.

This was after the 14-year-old Sooryavanshi produced a knock for the ages and raced to the three-figure mark in a mere 55 balls to become the second fastest centurion in this competition.

The triumph, which ensured India's continued dominance in the age-group showpiece, could be attributed to a robust domestic structure, vast talent pool, exposure to advanced coaching, high-quality preparation and passion for the game among the country's youth.

India last won the tournament in 2022.

Once India crossed 400 in the final, they were the overwhelming favourites to emerge victorious, and that is exactly how the script panned out, with the bowlers performing as a collective outfit.

To some extent, the achievement bore resemblance to the exploits of world-class Indian U-19 teams of the past that featured the likes of Virat Kohli and Rohit Sharma, but this side led by Ayush Mhatre has carved a niche of its own, especially in terms of sheer ruthlessness, and no one exemplifies that better than that raging force called Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

Sooryavanshi's knock is the record for the best individual score in an U-19 World Cup final and is also the highest team

total in the summit showdown of the tournament. The opener exploded when it mattered the most, reaching his fifty in just 32 balls and continued in the same vein to torment the English bowlers with his wide range of strokes. His second fifty came off just 23 balls.

As many as 150 off his 175 runs came off boundaries thanks to his 15 sixes and as many fours during a knock in which he literally toyed with the opposition attack and turned the Harare Sports Club into his playground.

Brief scores: India: 411/9 in 50 overs (Vaibhav Sooryavanshi 175, Ayush Mhatre 53, James Minto 3-63, Sebastian Morgan 2-74) bt England: 311 all out in 40.2 overs (Caleb Falconer 115, Ben Dawkins 66, James Minto 28, Thomas Rew 31; RS Ambirish 3-56, Deepesh Devendran 2-64, Kanishk Chouhan 2-63) by 100 runs. **PoM** & **Pos:** Vaibhav Sooryavanshi.

RECORDS TUMBLE

- The 15 sixes by Vaibhav Sooryavanshi during his 80-ball 175 vs England are the most in an U-19 innings, bettering 12 by Michael Hill of Australia vs Namibia in 2008.
- Sooryavanshi has 110 sixes in just 25 innings in Youth ODIs, exactly double of the next best: 55 (33 innings) by Bangladesh's Zawad Abrar.
- Sooryavanshi's 150 off 71 balls is the fastest, eclipsing 98 balls by Ben Mayes of England vs Scotland in the same competition.
- India's 411/9 is the highest score ever in an U-19 WC.

India bank on fit-again Nagal for good start

Big-serving Dhakshineswar could pull a rabbit out of the hat

HITA PRAKASH
BENGALURU, DHNS

On the final day of the five-day preparation camp, it was time for the most-anticipated reveal: the draw ceremony for the Davis Cup Qualifiers Round 1 tie between India and the Netherlands at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium here on Friday.

Much to the relief of Indian tennis fans, the country's top singles player Sumit Nagal, whose fitness had been in question after a hip injury a few weeks ago, was seated on the dais alongside four team-mates and captain Rohit Rajpal. With his availability confirmed, it was announced minutes later that the 28-year-old world No. 281 will open India's campaign against the visitors' No. 2 player and world No. 162 Guy Den Ouden on Saturday.

Familiar conditions and home support are expected to work in India's favour, even though they are ranked 33rd on the Davis Cup merit list. A strong performance against the world No. 6-ranked Dutch, who finished runners-up in 2024, would take India a step closer to the World Group Stage. Nagal's return to the court after more than a month, as one of the most experienced players in the squad, also bodes well for the hosts.

The 23-year-old Den Ouden, on the other hand, appears to have found his rhythm on the courts here and has adapted well to Bengaluru conditions over the past few days.



India's Sumit Nagal (right) and the Netherlands' Jesper De Jong pose for a photo during the draw ceremony of the Davis Cup Qualifier Round 1 tie at the SM Krishna Tennis Stadium in Bengaluru on Friday. DH PHOTO/ B K JANARDHAN

The duo's last and only meeting came at the 2025 Prague Challenger where the Indian was brushed aside 1-6, 1-6. Will a recovering Nagal be able to turn the tables this weekend?

This is why Dhakshineswar Suresh's role as India's No. 2 becomes crucial in the second singles contest. The big-serving 6-foot-5, 25-year-old is drawn against Dutch No. 1 Jesper de Jong who admitted that he knows little about his tall opponent's game. Being relatively unknown could work in the Madurai man's favour, making both opening-day matches intriguing affairs.

"Going to Switzerland for the first time, being with team India was an unreal experience. And then doing this for my second time in front of the home crowd is a really big honour. We've been having a good team chemistry on and off court, so we're excited to compete," said Dhakshineswar.

As for the doubles on Sunday, India's strong point for several years, Yuki Bhambri (who recently entered the

doubles top-20) is set to partner seasoned pro Sriram Balaji. Initially, it was Rithvik Bollipalli's name that was doing the rounds as Bhambri's partner. However, skipper Rajpal explained: "We got here early and we've been playing a lot of sets. Balaji has been competing back-to-back and came here after a good result in Bahrain."

"It was a difficult decision, but Rithvik has not played actively in tournaments for the last two months. So, we thought it would be better to give him more time to gradually come back in."

The reverse singles, on Sunday, will see the both the No. 1s take on each other before the fifth and final rubber between the No. 2s, should it go that deep. But considering the Dutch team is without their best players – Tallon Griekspoor (world No. 29) and Botic van de Zandschulp (67) – and the Indians in their comfort zone, the encounter between the two teams, with head-to-head record being 2-2, could be an evenly poised affair.

Atletico advance to semis after 5-0 Betis rout

MADRID, AP: Ademola Lookman scored on his Atletico Madrid debut in a 5-0 rout of Real Betis that sent Diego Simeone's team to the semi-finals of the Copa del Rey.

David Hancko, Giuliano Simeone, Antoine Griezmann and Thiago Almada also scored for Atletico as it advanced to the last four for the third straight season.

Atletico will try to reach its first Copa final since winning the competition for the last time in 2012-13.

The draw for the semi-finals – which also includes Barcelona, Athletic Bilbao and Real Sociedad – will be on Friday.

Hancko opened the scoring for the visitors in the 12th minute and Giuliano Simeone added to the lead in the 30th before Lookman got his first goal for Atletico on a fast breakaway in the 37th.

Griezmann scored the fourth goal in the 62nd – with an assist by Lookman – and Almada closed the scoring in the 83rd.

Lookman was signed from Atalanta near the end of the winter transfer window. The 28-year-old Nigerian forward had requested to leave Atalanta citing broken promises and poor treatment.

Mexico midfielder Obed Vargas also made his Atletico debut after being signed from the Seattle Sounders.

Duke Of Tuscany for feature race KOLKATA SELECTIONS

Pesi Shroff-trained Duke Of Tuscany, to be ridden by Suraj Naraidu, appeals most in small field of four runners in the fray for the Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Cup, the feature event of the races to be run over a distance of mile and a half on Saturday. The first race starts at 2 pm.

1. **Contralido Handicap - 1100M:** Blazing Black 1, Flaming Grey 2, Godsend Divine 3.
2. **Philippines Cup - 1600M:** Mindful 1, Aeropolis 2, Natural Grace 3.
3. **Ich Dien Handicap - 1100M:** Re-splendence 1, Cortado 2, Kerry Gold 3.
4. **Green Sari Handicap - 1400M:** Xan-the 1, Victorious Omen 2, Polka Dot 3.
5. **Queen Elizabeth II Memorial Cup - 2400M:** Duke Of Tuscany 1, Golden Kingdom 2.
6. **Mamma's Mink Handicap (Div I) - 1400M:** Keitaro 1, Enchanting 2, Queen Of Mafia 3.
7. **Mamma's Mink Handicap (Div II) - 1400M:** Amaze And Inspire 1, Power Racer 2, Rosalia 3.
8. **Day's Best:** Xanthie. **Jackpot:** 3, 4, 5, 6, 7. **Treble:** 2, 3, 4. **Hit treble:** 5, 6, 7.

Rudrankksh takes gold ahead of Arjun

NEW DELHI, PTI

Former world champion shooter Rudrankksh Patil offered a glimpse of what lies ahead this season by clinching the gold medal, while Olympian Arjun Babuta finished second, as India made a telling statement in the men's 10m air rifle event at the Asian



Arjun Babuta (left) and Rudrankksh Patil. NRAI

Championship here Friday. Rudrankksh, one of the finest rifle marksmen to emerge from the country after Olympic gold medalist Abhinav Bindra and Gagan Narang, shot a superb 251.9 in the final to hold off the challenge from compatriot Babuta (250.7) and stamp his authority on the sport, as the duo,

along with Vishal Singh, also earned India the team gold in the event.

The 22-year-old Rudrankksh, who endured the disappointment of missing the Paris Olympics despite earning a quota place for the country, underlined his class by topping the qualification round with a superb 632.1.

Manikanta exits after a controversial false start

ADITYA K HALDER
BENGALURU, DHNS

Manikanta Hoblidhar had an unwanted start to his 2026 season as India's second-fastest sprinter made a false start on the opening day of the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships in Tianjin, China, on Friday.

However, a video of the race circulating on social media suggests that the 24-year-old Karnataka athlete, who was making his 60m indoor debut, wasn't the one to make the false start.

Competing in heat 3 of the 60m dash, Manikanta, positioned on lane six, moved a fraction of a second after his Saudi Arabian competitor Ali Khalid Mas (on lane five) made the first movement before the gun for the race went off while the rest of the pack also reacted, as seen in the video.

However, Manikanta was the only runner who was dis-



Manikanta Hoblidhar (right) gets disqualified at the Asian Indoor Athletics Championships in Tianjin, China, on Friday.

qualified, under Rule 16.8 (TR) of World Athletics, while not much of a protest came from the Indian athlete.

The Athletics Federation of India (AFI) decided not to protest against the decision too as they felt their athlete was at fault.

"Team management has confirmed that they have seen the reaction time and our athlete has fouled. Electronic printout has been shown to our team management as

well," said a senior AFI official.

The incident has an eerie similarity to 100m hurdler Jyothi Yarraji's false start at the Asian Games in 2023, when the Indian hurdler reacted to his Chinese rivals Wu Yanni's early start. Both runners were disqualified right after but Yarraji held her ground and protested against the decision.

Both Yanni and Yarraji were eventually allowed to compete following a long conversation between the officials as they postponed the decision on the matter post-race. Yanni went on to finish first but was ultimately disqualified, upgrading Yarraji's bronze medal to silver.

Meanwhile, high jumper Aadarsh Ram opened India's medal tally at the event as he clinched a bronze medal with an attempt of 2.19 metre.

Praveen Chithravel and Yogita finished fourth in the men's high jump and women's shot put finals respectively.

Keerthana falls short at the final hurdle

BENGALURU, DHNS: The occasion of playing her first big final seemed to get to Keerthana Pandian as the Indian youngster came up short in the title clash against defending champion Narantuya Bayarsaikhan at the Asian Snooker Championships in Doha on Friday.

The 23-year-old, who was in good touch right through the tournament, was error-prone in the final and went down 1-3 to the Mongolian cueist in a contest that never rose to any great heights. For large parts, both resorted to the safety-first ap-



Keerthana Pandian

proach, Keerthana more so.

The Indian was in the contest – a 10-red affair for women – in the marathon opening frame of the best-of-five

The loss of the first frame on the black seemed to play on Keerthana's mind as she was a trifle tentative. After an early break of 19, the Mongolian punished the Indian's error on the yellow with a gritty break of 40.

Keerthana, who outclassed fellow Indian Anupama Ramachandran, the reigning IBSF World champion, 3-0 in the semifinals, fought back to take the third frame.

Results: Women: Final: Narantuya Bayarsaikhan (MGL) bt Keerthana Pandian (IND) 3-1 (44-42, 59-40), 1-17-43, 57-6). **Semis:** Keerthana bt Anupama Ramachandran (IND) 3-0 (55-17, 47-15, 47 (31)-13); Bayarsaikhan bt Ho Yee Ki (HK) 3-0 (53 (32)-19, 68 (42)-58, 42-39).

Don't Miss Tomorrow's DH on Sunday

BIG PICTURE

Adult friendships: The great reset.

BOOKS

What we wear is what we are...

ART & PURSUITS

Photographing the peoples of India.

WELLNESS

Understanding the role of lifestyle in cancer.

GENDER

Raising a Gen Alpha daughter...

FOOD & DRINK

Why eating local produce matters.

Government of Karnataka - Department of Health and Family Welfare

Taluk General Hospital , Soraba, Shivamogga

Email: sorabhospital@gmail.com Tel: 08184-295260

No.TGHS/Development(2)/01/2025-26 Date: 28-01-2026

E-Tender Notice

Taluk General Hospital, Soraba, Shivamogga District, invites an e-tender notice in a two-cover submission system in accordance with the Karnataka Transparency Act (KTPP), 1999, and Rules, 2000, through https://kppp.karnataka.gov. in for providing the services of 12 Group 'D' and 12 non-clinical cleaning staff on an outsourced basis for the year 2026-27.

Taluk General Hospital , Soraba, Shivamogga District, invites e-tender notice in two-cover submission system in accordance with the Karnataka Transparency Act (KTPP) 1999. Rules 2000 through https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in for the providing the services of 12 Group 'D' and 12 Non-clinical cleaning staff on outsourced basis for the year 2026-27.

Tender Announcement No.: No.TGHS/Development(2)/01/2025-26 Date: 28-01-2026 Tender Details : Regarding providing the services of 12 Group 'D' and 12 non-clinical cleaning staff on an outsourced basis for the year 2026-27 at Taluk General Hospital, Soraba, Shivamogga District.

Duration for submission of tender : Date: 04-02-2026 to 21-02-2026 upto 5-00 PM Estimated Tender Amount: Rs. 70-00 Lakh EMD details : EMD Amount Rs.1.75 Lakh to be submitted in e-Procurement

Further details may be obtained from the Administrative Medical Officer, Taluk General Hospital, Soraba, Shivamogga District, during office hours, and the information can also be obtained from https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in.

Sd/- Administrative Medical Officers, Taluk General Hospital, Soraba, Shivamogga District

DIPR/smg/ksmca/25-26/56/02/1767

BENGALURU SOUTH CITY CORPORATION

Office of the Executive Engineer, Uttarahalli & Anjanapura Division, Bengaluru South City Corporation, Amrutha Nagar - Konankunte Main road, Soudamini Layout, Bengaluru-62.

No:EE/UAD/TEND/ 04 /2025-26 Date: 06-02-2026

INVITATION FOR SHORT TERM TENDER

(Two Cover Tender)

(Through GOK KPP Portal <https://kppp.karnataka.gov.in> only)

The Executive Engineer, Uttarahalli & Anjanapura Division, Bengaluru South City Corporation, Bengaluru-62 invites tenders on behalf the Commissioner from eligible contractors registered with KPWD/CPWD/BWSSB/MES/ Railways/National Highway or any State Government Organizations for the construction of works detailed in the table below.

Sl. No.	Name of the works
1.	Annual Maintenance of Kembathalli Lake, Kothnur Lake and Anjanaura Lake. (Others) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.46.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 92000.00
2.	Annual Maintenance of Konappana Agrahara Lake, Chowdeshwari Lake and Parappana Agrahara Lake (Others) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹. 47.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 94000.00
3.	Annual Maintenance of Yelechenahalli Lake, Kalena Agrahara Lake and Swarnakunte Gudde Kere (CAT-I) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹. 32.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 32000.00
4.	Annual Maintenance of Dorekere Lake, Uttarahalli Lake and Devarakere Lake. (ST) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹. 49.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 49000.00
5.	Annual Maintenance of Gubbala Lake, Subramanyapura Lake and Doddakallasandra Lake,(Others) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.42.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 84000.00
6.	Annual Maintenance of Basapura Lake 1 and 2 (SC) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.31.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 31000.00
7.	Annual Maintenance of Nynappanahalli Lake and Begur Lake. (SC) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.47.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 47000.00
8.	Annual Maintenance of Basavanapura Lake, Kammanahalli Lake (Meenakshi Lake) and Yelenahalli Lake,(CAT-II(A)) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.38.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 38000.00
9.	Annual Maintenance of Chunchagatta Lake and Konankunte Lake. (Others) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.27.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 54000.00
10.	Annual Maintenance of Gottigere Lake And Subbarayanakere Lake. (Others) Approximate Amount Put to Tender ₹.35.00 Lakhs, EMD ₹. 70000.00

Calendar of Events : (1) Uploading of Tender documents from 10-02-2026 (2) Last Date for uploading the Filled Tender Document is 18-02-2026 upto 4:00 pm. (4) Date of Technical Bid Opening of Tenders is on 20-02-2026 after 4:30 pm.

Sd/-
Executive Engineer
Uttarahalli & Anjanapura Division



ICC
MEN'S T20
WORLD CUP
INDIA & SRI LANKA 2026

ICC
MEN'S
T20
WORLD
CUP
SCHEDULE

FEB 7

- Netherlands vs Pakistan (Colombo, 11:00 am)
- Scotland vs West Indies (Kolkata, 3:00 pm)
- India vs USA** (Mumbai, 7:00 pm)

FEB 8

- Afghanistan vs New Zealand (Chennai, 11:00 am)
- England vs Nepal (Mumbai, 3:00 pm)
- Sri Lanka vs Ireland (Colombo, 7:00 pm)

FEB 9

- Italy vs Scotland (Kolkata, 11:00 am)
- Oman vs Zimbabwe (Colombo, 3:00 pm)
- Canada vs South Africa (Ahmedabad, 7:00 pm)

FEB 10

- Namibia vs Netherlands (Delhi, 11:00 am)
- New Zealand vs UAE (Chennai, 3:00 pm)
- Pakistan vs USA (Colombo, 7:00 pm)

FEB 11

- Afghanistan vs South Africa (Ahmedabad, 11:00 am)
- Australia vs Ireland (Colombo, 3:00 pm)
- England vs West Indies (Mumbai, 7:00 pm)

FEB 12

- Sri Lanka vs Oman (Kandy, 11:00 am)
- Italy vs Nepal (Mumbai, 3:00 pm)
- India vs Namibia** (Delhi, 7:00 pm)

FEB 13

- Australia vs Zimbabwe (Colombo, 11:00 am)
- Canada vs UAE (Delhi, 3:00 pm)
- Netherlands vs USA (Chennai, 7:00 pm)

FEB 14

- Ireland vs Oman (Colombo, 11:00 am)
- England vs Scotland (Kolkata, 3:00 pm)
- New Zealand vs South Africa (Ahmedabad, 7:00 pm)

FEB 15

- Nepal vs West Indies (Mumbai, 11:00 am)
- Namibia vs USA (Chennai, 3:00 pm)
- India vs Pakistan** (Colombo, 7:00 pm)

FEB 16

- Afghanistan vs UAE (Delhi, 11:00 am)
- England vs Italy (Kolkata, 3:00 pm)
- Australia vs Sri Lanka (Kandy, 7:00 pm)

FEB 17

- Canada vs New Zealand (Chennai, 11:00 am)
- Ireland vs Zimbabwe (Kandy, 3:00 pm)
- Nepal vs Scotland (Mumbai, 7:00 pm)

FEB 18

- South Africa vs UAE (Delhi, 11:00 am)
- Namibia vs Pakistan (Colombo, 3:00 pm)
- India vs Netherlands** (Ahmedabad, 7:00 pm)

FEB 19

- Italy vs West Indies (Kolkata, 11:00 am)
- Sri Lanka vs Zimbabwe (Colombo, 3:00 pm)
- Afghanistan vs Canada (Chennai, 7:00 pm)

FEB 20

- Australia vs Oman (Kandy, 7:00 pm).

SUPER EIGHTS:
FEB 21-MARCH 1.

SEMIFINALS:
MARCH 4-5.

FINAL: MARCH 8.

INDIA KICKSTART quest for history

Defending champions take on minnows USA in opening clash

SIDNEY KIRAN
MUMBAI, DHNS

Having done almost everything right over the last 19 months and dominating the format like none other, a confident India will begin their quest for cricketing history when they open their T20 World Cup title defence against minnows USA here on Saturday.

Since winning the coveted trophy for the second time on a warm June 2024 afternoon in Barbados – that somewhat wiped away the agony of the 2023 ODI World Cup heartbreak while ending India's 11-year drought in global tournaments – the Men In Blue have become an irresistible force in T20Is, losing just six times in 41 matches in the period.

In a format that's supposed to bridge the gap and level the playing field, India have ended up opening a yawning gap between them and the rest of the world. It's so wide, pundits and fans have installed India as the overwhelming favourites to wear the crown for a record third time. The swagger surrounding this fearless bunch, led by the enterprising Suryakumar Yadav, is similar to what the West Indies displayed in the 1970s and the Australians in the late 1990s and 2000s.

The major factor behind India's phenomenal success has been the breath-taking batting, where they've toyed with a wide variety of bowling with relative ease. Abhishek Sharma, easily the most destructive opener in the world at the moment, has time and again provided India with blazing starts. The way he's able to dictate play in the Powerplay is a sight to behold.

Tilak Varma, who missed the preceding New Zealand series due to injury but returned to fitness in the warm-up game, has consistently delivered, while Suryakumar, who was going through a bad run in the build-up, found his mojo

against the Kiwis. Shivam Dube, Hardik Pandya and Rinku Singh provide the fire-works in the middle order, the trio who have the uncanny ability to start swinging from the word go.

The only concern for India was the continued poor run of opener Sanju Samson. But Ishan Kishan, a late addition to the squad, smashed a century and a half-century in the New Zealand series and even belted a 53 in the warm-up affair versus South Africa. This collective batting might is what India will be looking to flex against the USA at the Wankhede Stadium on Saturday.

The opening clash offers a chance for India to fix one issue that cropped up quite late - the slide of ace spinners Varun Chakravathy and Kuldeep Yadav. Both of them were well worked out by the Kiwis, but a strong display against the USA will bolster their confidence ahead of the bigger battles.

The USA, who stunned Pakistan via Super Over in the last edition and even made it to the Super Eights, will be hoping to replicate the same. It'll be a homecoming for players like captain Monak Patel, Harmeet Singh, Saurabh Netravalkar – who was one of the stars in his country's rousing run in 2024 – Shubham Ranjane, and Milind Kumar. All of them played domestic cricket here before moving West for better opportunities given the over-abundance of talent in India.

While there will be hugs and handshakes before the contest considering they shared the dressing room with some of the Indians, they know the Herculean challenge that awaits them once play starts. With an entire stadium rooting for India and the hosts looking to put their best foot forward, it's something they are not accustomed to. Suryakumar and his men will be gunning for nothing less than a big win.

Squads: India: Suryakumar Yadav (capt), Ishan Kishan, Sanju Samson, Rinku Singh, Axar Patel, Abhishek Sharma, Shivam Dube, Hardik Pandya, Tilak Varma, Washington Sundar, Arshdeep Singh, Jasprit Bumrah, Kuldeep Yadav, Varun Chakravathy, Mohammed Siraj.

USA: Monak Patel (capt), Andries Gous, Saiteja Mukkamalla, Sayan Jahangir, Harmeet Singh, Shehan Jayasuriya, Sanjay Krishnamurthy, Milind Kumar, Mohammad Mohsin, Shubham Ranjane, Shadley van Schalkwyk, Ali Khan, Jaspdeep Singh, Noshush Kenijige, Saurabh Netravalkar.



Skipper Suryakumar Yadav's timely return to form augurs well for India as they begin their campaign to defend the T20 World Cup from Saturday against the USA in Mumbai. AFP



India's Harshit Rana was ruled out due to a knee injury.

Rana ruled out of T20 WC, Siraj included

SIDNEY KIRAN
MUMBAI, DHNS

India pacer Harshit Rana was ruled out of the ICC T20 World Cup after failing to recover from a right knee injury sustained earlier this week, with Mohammed Siraj named as his replacement.

"Team India pacer Harshit Rana has been ruled out of the upcoming ICC Men's T20 World Cup 2026 after sustaining a knee injury during the warm-up match against South Africa in Navi Mumbai on February 4, 2026," said a statement from the BCCI.

"Following consultations with a specialist and subsequent scans, the BCCI medical team deemed him unfit to participate in the tournament. The team management wishes him a speedy recovery. Mohd Siraj will join the team as Harshit's replacement in the squad," it added.

During India's warm-up game against South Africa at the DY Patil Stadium, the 24-year-old Rana twice aborted his run-up and was seen clutching his right knee while bowling his first over. He managed to complete the over, conceding 16 runs, but limped off the field in visible distress right after that.

Skipper Suryakumar Yadav, addressing the pre-match press conference at

the Wankhede Stadium, had expressed concern over Rana's injury, literally ruling him out of the marquee event. "After the warm-up game, he wasn't looking good. Physios are assessing him, but I think they will find out today. But he doesn't look good. Yeah, it's not that great," said the concerned Mumbaikar.

Suryakumar's worst fears came true later in the day as Rana, had become an integral member of the team owing to his ability to land a few lusty blows down the order. When asked how big a blow it would be for India if Rana was indeed going to be ruled out, Suryakumar joked that there were enough players in the dressing room to take the field against the USA on Saturday.

Although the BCCI retained Washington Sundar in the squad, there are concerns about the Tamil Nadu spinning all-rounder's fitness. Sundar suffered a side strain during the opening game of the New Zealand ODI series and has been recuperating at BCCI's Centre of Excellence since then.

Siraj, primarily considered a Test bowler, last played a T20I for India against Sri Lanka in Pallekele in July 2024. He returned to the ODI fold after a year's hiatus for the three-match series against Australia Down Under last October.

SKY wants his fearless men to 'stay in the present'

SIDNEY KIRAN
MUMBAI, DHNS



Suryakumar Yadav. PTI

Every time India enters an ICC tournament, the expectations are huge from their billion fans. For this T20 World Cup, set to start on Saturday, it has increased even further considering the incredible form they've been in over the last 19 months since winning the previous edition in Barbados.

Add the fact that they will be playing at home, barring the game against Pakistan, the pressure on the shoulders of captain Suryakumar Yadav and Co is immense. Suryakumar, addressing the media on the eve of the Group A clash against the USA at the Wankhede Stadium, oozed confidence though, exhorting his men to enjoy the dream opportunity of playing a home World Cup.

"See, I think when you are playing at home, there is always an added pressure and I am not running away from that fact. To be honest, there will be nerves. There will be pressure. But if you see the positive side of it, there will be a lot of cheer around because you are playing at home

soil. So you know there are people backing you," said Suryakumar. "Talking about expectations. Yes, definitely. The way we have played in the last one or two years, people must be expecting the same. And we will try giving them more reasons to stay on top by playing the same brand of cricket. There are so many people coming to watch in the stadiums. I have told my boys the same thing. 30,000-35,000 people coming. So many people watching at home. Let's give them a good time. Let's give them entertainment."

India will be chasing history at this World Cup. Not only will they be hoping to win it for a record third time, they'll be looking to

be the first team to defend the crown successfully. Also, they'll be hoping to become the first to triumph as a host nation. When asked about this, a constantly smiling Suryakumar said the best way to deal with it is by staying in the moment.

"See, there is no doubt that we have been playing good cricket. But at the same time, you have to be in the present as well. Yes, you are playing at home. You are expected to win the tournament. The way you have been playing your cricket. No one has defended the title. No one has won on home soil. Yes, everything runs in everyone's mind," said Suryakumar. "But at the same time, you have to be in the present as well. You have to see what you want to do on a given day. What kind of cricket you want to play, that is very important. And just stay in the present. Have your feet where you are, stay grounded. Because when you are playing at home, you want to be more excited. You want to give people more than they expect. At that time, you might make a mistake. But I think staying in the present will be the key in this World Cup.

ICC T20 World Cup Editions

Year	Winner	Runner-up	PoT
2007	India	Pakistan	Shahid Afridi (Pak)
2009	Pakistan	Sri Lanka	T Dilshan (SL)
2010	England	Australia	K Pietersen (Eng)
2012	West Indies	Sri Lanka	S Watson (Aus)
2014	Sri Lanka	India	Virat Kohli (Ind)
2016	West Indies	England	Virat Kohli (Ind)
2021	Australia	New Zealand	David Warner (Aus)
2022	England	Pakistan	Sam Curran (Eng)
2024	India	South Africa	Jasprit Bumrah (Ind)

Most runs in T20 World Cups

Runs	Player
1292	Virat Kohli (Ind)
1220	Rohit Sharma (Ind)
1016	Mahela Jaywardene (SL)
1013	Jos Buttler (Eng)



Fastest 50s

By	Balls	vs	Year
Yuvraj Singh (Ind)	12	Eng	2007
Stephan Myburgh (Ned)	17	Ire	2014
Marcus Stoinis (Aus)	17	SL	2022

Sixes and T20 WC

Chris Gayle's tally of **63 sixes** (from 33 matches) is the most by any player.



Nicholas Pooran's tally of **17 sixes** (in 7 matches in 2024) is the most by any player in a particular edition.

Rohit Sharma is the only Indian player to hit **50 sixes** (in 27 matches) in the ICC T20 World Cup.

Yuvraj Singh is the only batter to hit **6 sixes** in an over in ICC T20 World Cup when he clobbered England's Stuart Broad to achieve the feat in 2007.

TOP PERFORMERS

- **Top run-getters**
 - Smriti Mandhana: 377 runs
 - Grace Harris: 237 runs
 - Richa Ghosh: 189 runs
- **Top wicket-takers**
 - Nadine de Klerk: 16 wickets
 - Lauren Bell: 12 wickets
 - Shreyanka Patil: 11 wickets

The campaign emphasised the mental aspect of the team, placing value on a good dressing room atmosphere, especially for a squad that was unable to come out on the winning side in tight situations last year.



Royal Challengers Bengaluru players celebrate with the trophy after being crowned Women's Premier League champions, beating Delhi Capitals by six wickets. PTI

Jubilant Royal Challengers Bengaluru sing again - ee sala cup namdu

VIGNESH BHARADWAJ
BENGALURU, DHNS

For all the Delhi Capitals' fight throughout the Women's Premier League, for the grit they showcased in making four finals, they couldn't get rid of the bridesmaid tag, finishing second best once again against a rampaging Royal Challengers Bengaluru.

RCB's title-winning 2024/4 was the highest successful run-chase in the history of WPL. It was also the highest chase in any T20 competition final.

RCB broke the duck of being the first team to win the WPL after finishing atop the table, and Smriti Mandhana (87) recorded the highest individual score in the WPL playoffs.

RCB's title also meant this was the first time both WPL

and IPL trophies have been held by the same team. And for a franchise that spent a good 16 years without a title, their ubiquitous but often ridiculed slogan "ee sala cup namde (this time, the cup is ours)" has transfigured into "ee sala cup namdu (this time, the cup has become ours)", having three titles in as many years (WPL 2024 & 2026, IPL 2025).

For starters, the Challengers' campaign suffered a setback before it even started with the resignation of 2024 WPL-winning coach Luke Williams and the reliable all-rounder Ellyse Perry pulling out. However, at no point did it feel like they missed the two.

Malolan Rangarajan was promoted as the head coach and now basks in the glory of guiding RCB to their re-

cord-equalling second title. Throughout the campaign, RCB were far ahead for the chasing pack, winning six of the eight League games en-route to the final.

They showed character and resolve, starting from the first game, chasing down 155 against Mumbai Indians after being reduced to 65/5, with Nadine de Klerk playing the starring role.

Once their confidence grew, RCB brought in calm aggression to their batting, chasing 144 in just 12.1 overs against Gujarat Giants.

This time, it was Grace Harris who lit up the fireworks.

When the chips were down after back-to-back defeats following five straight wins, RCB turbo-charged their way past the Warriorz, again chasing 144 in 13.1 overs.

It also highlighted the leadership abilities of skipper Mandhana, who capped it off with an exhibition in handling pressure in the final.

Coming off a turbulent phase in her personal life just before the event began, the elegant left-hander displayed exemplary grace, calm and composure to guide the team to the pinnacle.

Before this season, Mandhana had scored 646 runs, averaging 24.84, with four fifties across three previous WPL editions.

However, during the 2026 season, the Orange Cap winner hammered 377 runs, averaging 53.85, including three half-centuries.

Mandhana showcased her versatile nature, shifting gears according to the situation, something Malolan had

earlier mentioned was critical for success.

"Very pleased with the result. RCB fans, I feel, are the best in the world. Wherever we play, we get support. Whatever we do is for them," Mandhana said after the game.

Foreign imports Lauren Bell (Rs 90 lakh) and de Klerk (Rs 65 lakh) proved out to be smart buys.

The duo brought all their T20 experience to the table while performing the tough job of bowling in the powerplay and at the death.

Other successes for RCB were Shreyanka Patil, Richa Ghosh Georgia Voll, who slipped into support roles with ease. The other factor in the campaign was selection. Malolan and Co picked the squads and XI's based on ability and the faith was repaid.

Compiled by Arun Gopalakrishnan

Today's other matches

Pakistan vs Netherlands
(11:00 am), Colombo

West Indies vs Scotland
(3:00 pm), Kolkata

Karnataka
endure tough
opening day

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnata-
take were rolled over for a
mere 244 in 71.4 overs at the
Kaushiki Cricket Ground in
Ramnagar as hosts Uttara-
khand drove to a position of
strength on the opening day
of their Col CK Nayudu Elite
Group D fixture.

Uttarakhand were 43
for no loss in 16 overs with
openers Negi (22 not out)
and Aditya Naithani (20 not
out) batting in the middle,
trailing Karnataka by 201
runs.

Asked to bat first, Karnata-
take were dealt an early blow
in the eighth over as keeper
Faizan Khan (14) was the
first to go. The visitors then
continued to lose wickets at
regular intervals, slipping to
122/5 in the 43rd over.

Fighting knocks from
Dhruv Prabhakar (50),
Manvath Kumar L (49) and
Aneeshwar Gautham (31)
held the innings together
but could only take them to
a modest 244.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 244 all out
in 71.4 overs (Dhruv Prabhakar 50,
Aneeshwar Gautham 31, Manvath Ku-
mar L 49; Devansh 5-81, Dev 3-38) vs
Uttarakhand: 43/0 in 16 overs.

Aryan hat-trick
in BGFC victory

BENGALURU, DHNS: Aryan
A's hat-trick powered Ban-
galore Gunners FC to a con-
vincing 6-0 victory over KSP
FC in the BDFA B Division
League Championship at
the Bangalore Football Stadi-
um here on Friday.

Results: Bangalore Gunners FC: 6 (Rahul
M 8th, Aryan A 36th, 45th, 71st, Aaryan
Mudkanna 62nd, Vishnuvardhan S
72nd) bt KSP FC: 0; FC Mangalore: 2
(Prathap E 8th, Mohammad Fawas K
43rd) drew with Juno FC: 2 (Mohammed
Savad PN 26th, 39th); Infinite Belagavi
FC: 3 (Parth Desurkar 24th, Akash Desai
44th, Koushik Patil 80th+3) bt Shooterz
FC: 1 (Mutum Rishikanta Singh 55th);
William FC: 4 (Sham S 24th pen, Jihn V
51st, Dhanabaiy A 56th, V Rama Jayam
68th) bt Young Blues Elite FC: 1 (Arvind
C 72nd).

CRICKET RANJI TROPHY

Bowlers put K'taka in control

Agarwal hits unbeaten 54 after
visitors dismiss Mumbai for 120

G KRISHNAN
MUMBAI

Karnataka could not have
asked for a better start
to their realistic chance
of regaining the Ranji Trophy
this season than by bowling
out Mumbai for 120 in their
first innings in the quarterfinal
on Friday.

At close on Day 1, Karnata-
ka were 10 adrift of Mumbai,
at 110/2. KL Rahul stroked
his way to a 26-ball 28 (6x4)
before slamming pacer Mo-
hit Avasthi to cover fielder
Tanush Kotian. Even as cap-
tain Devdutt Padikkal edged
medium-pacer Suryansh
Shedje, opener Mayank
Agarwal (54 n.o.), was batting
unperturbed to keep vigil with
Karun Nair (3 n.o.)

On a seamer-friendly MCA-

BKC pitch, Karnataka rejoiced
when Mumbai captain Shar-
dul Thakur surprisingly chose
to bat.

Karnataka's three-wicket
hero Prasidh Krishna said at
the end of the day's play: "Hon-
estly, it was a good toss to lose
because we were also tending
towards bowling, for sure.

But they (the Karnataka
think-tank) were discussing
about batting first. So not
really surprised (at Mumbai
choosing to bat)."

And, Karnataka's three-
pronged pace attack of Vid-
wath Kaverappa, Vidyadhar
Patil and Prasidh made the
most of the conditions to
restrict the home team to
109/7 before leg-spinner
Shreyas Gopal polished off
the tail with a three-wicket
burst, 14 minutes before the



Prasidh Krishna (left), Vidwath Kaverappa (second from left) and Shreyas Gopal picked up three wickets apiece to help Karnataka dominate proceedings on the opening day of their Ranji Trophy quarterfinal against Mumbai at the MCA-BKC Ground on Friday.

scheduled tea. Kaverappa
and Vidyadhar shared the
new ball while Prasidh came
first change. For the first two
hours and a quarter, the trio
was nearly unplayable, stick-
ing to a wicket-to-wicket line
and beating the outside edge
often and even managing to
take the edges en route to
the waiting hands behind
the wicket.

Kaverappa started the
Mumbai downslide by catch-
ing the edge of Test opener
Yashasvi Jaiswal with the ball
marginally angling away from
the left-hander into wicket-
keeper Kruthik Krishna.

Young batting sensation
Musheer Khan, after being
beaten by a Vidyadhar deliv-
ery, edged the next one tamely
to first slip Rahul.

A lot depended on Mum-

bai's 'Mr Consistent' and their
highest run-getter, Siddhesh
Lad. But, on Friday, he too
came a cropper against the
probing attack. Before he
could settle down, he was
tested aplenty, rapped on the
pad by Vidyadhar and was not
given out while he was given
out leg before to Prasidh but
DRS saved him as the ball was
missing leg stump.

But, Lad was not lucky third
time, Kaverappa striking in
his second spell, fishing out-
side off and the edge taken by
Smaran at second slip above
his head. Lad was Kaverappa's
100th first-class victim, com-
ing in the bowler's 28th match.
The 26-year-old from Coorg
went on to take one more, that
of Shardul Thakur just when
it seemed the rival captain was
repairing the damage in the

company of the left-handed
opener Akhil Herwadkar.

Herwadkar, 31, and who
earlier in the season returned
to Mumbai Ranji Trophy
squad after a seven-season
gap, showed no hurry in scor-
ing after initially struggling
against them. He was lucky
when on 26, Smaran dropped
him at second slip off Prasidh.

Meanwhile, Prasidh, at first
change, lived up to his reputa-
tion. He generated bounce and
picked up three wickets, send-
ing back Suryansh Shedje,
caught by Smaran at second
slip, and then wicketkeeper
Akash Anand and Shams Mu-
lani off successive deliveries.
Prasidh's three wickets came
in a sensational spell of 5-2-9-
3 post-lunch after continuing
from a 4-2-2-0 spell prior to
the break.



Amrutha, Ashwini
make it to finals

BENGALURU, DHNS

Karataka's Amrutha Pra-
muthesh and three-time
Olympian Ashwini Pon-
nappa, also from the state but
representing Petroleum Sports
Promotion Board, reached the
women's and mixed doubles fi-
nals respectively at the Senior
Ranking Badminton tourna-
ment at the Karnataka Badmin-
ton Association here on Friday.

Amrutha paired up with
Delhi's Likhita Srivastava to
beat Maheshwari Devi (Ma-
nipur) and Pranavi N (Tamil
Nadu) in straight games 21-19,
21-16.

Ashwini and her team-mate
Aaryan Sapiah (Haryana) de-
feated Aman Sanjay (Maha-
rashtra) and Vaishnavi Khad-
kekar (Telangana) 21-16, 21-14
to reach the marquee clash.
Results: Semifinals: (Prefix denotes seed-



Mansi Singh. DH PHOTO/ B K
JANARDHAN

ing, Karnataka unless mentioned): Men:
Singles: Alap Mishra (MP) bt Dhruv Negi
(Utr) 15-21, 21-16, 21-9.
Women's Singles: 1- Mansi Singh (UP) bt
Tasnim Mir (Guj) 22-20, 21-19; 3- Shruti
Mundada (Mah) bt Tanishq M (AP) 21-
10, 21-11. **Doubles:** Amrutha P/ Likhita
Srivastava (Del) bt Maheshwari Devi Ksh-
tirmayum (Man)/ Pranavi N (TN) 21-19,
21-16; Aditi Bhatt (Utr) / Shrawani Walekar
(Mah) bt Zenith Abbigail (Dli) / Maneesha K
(RBI) 21-15, 21-13.
Mixed doubles: Aaryan Sapiah (Har)/
Ashwini Ponnappa (PSPB) bt Aman Sanjay
(Mah) / Vaishnavi Khadkekar (Ts) 21-16,
21-14.

Karnataka hand Goa innings defeat

BENGALURU, DHNS: Karnata-
take posted their first victory
in the U-14 Boys South Zone
tournament as they handed
an innings and 165-run defeat
to Goa on Day 2 at the Vizzy
Stadium in Vizianagaram on
Friday.

Krishna Kumar took six
wickets (2/34 and 4/16) on the
day across two innings while
Chetan Tej Raju claimed 4/27

in the first innings as Goa were
all out twice on the day for 128
and 113 respectively after Kar-
nataka posted 406/1 the other
day.

Brief scores: Karnataka: 406/1 decl.
bt Goa: (O/n: 66/3) 128 all out in 57.2
overs (Sanch Sulesh Naik 27; Ashith
Sanjay Girish 2-34, Krishna Kumar
2-26, Chetan Tej Raju 4-27) & 113 all
out in 67.4 overs (Kavish Parab 55;
Aaryan Nagesh 2-40, Krishna Kumar
4-16).

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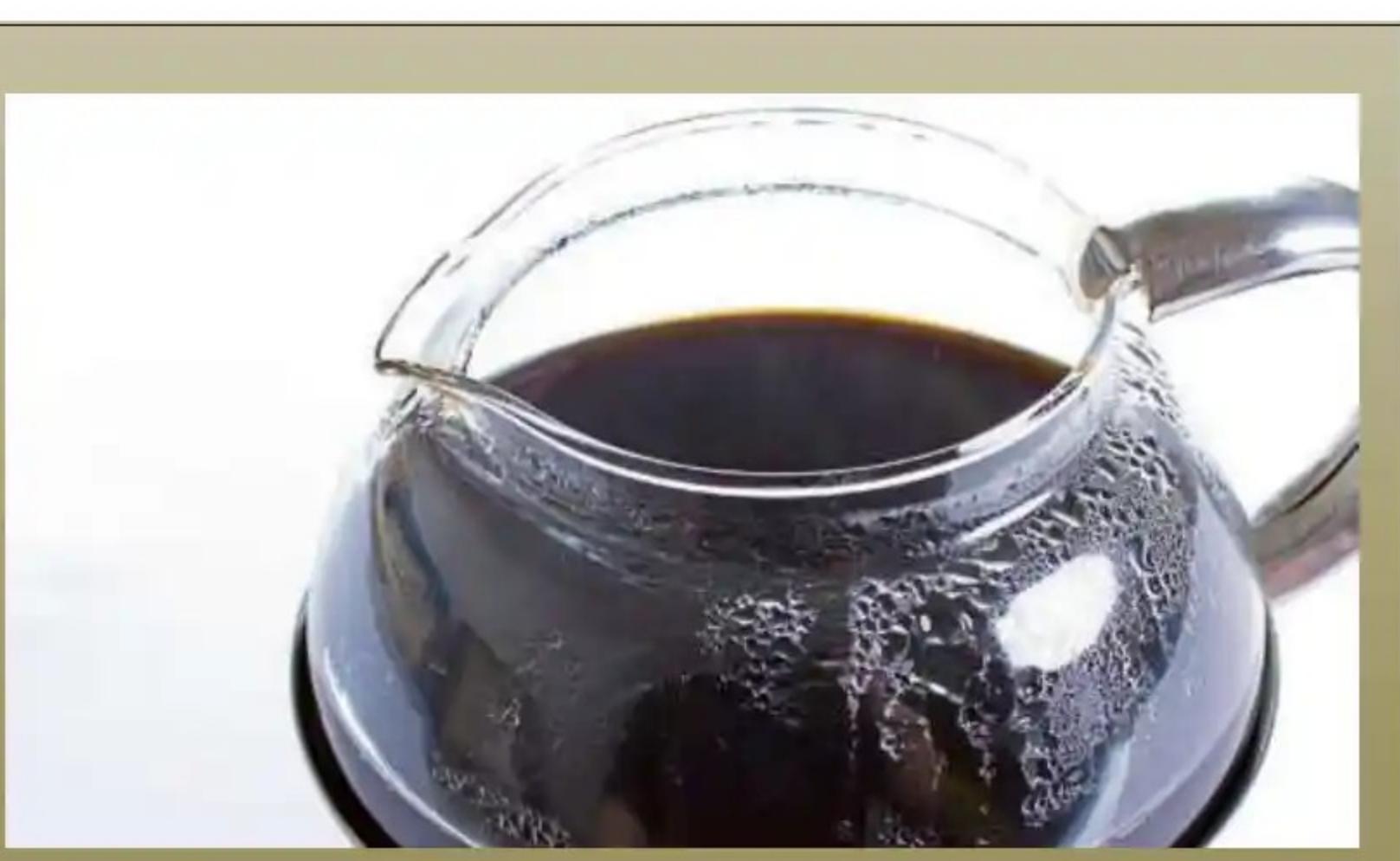
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Storm
in the
coffee
cup
P02



ADVERTORIAL &
PROMOTIONAL
LIFESTYLE FEATURE



BRING
HOME
THE GYM

PAGE 04

Show Buzz | Shahzad Ali

'I wake up and the harmonium is in my hands...'

Playback singer Shahzad Ali is making headlines in Bollywood circles for his rendition of the title song 'Ishq Jalakar Karvan' in the Ranveer Singh starrer, Dhurandhar. Born in Bikaner in 1993, he comes from a family that has had a deep connection to music. Since an early age, he expressed love for singing, and trained under his guru, Abdul Sattar Bhiyani.

The performer and music producer is known for his soulful depth and dynamic versatility. He first gained national attention through reality shows such as SurKshetra and The Voice, where his command over classical and contemporary styles set him apart.

Since then, Shahzad has delivered memorable tracks across films and Web series, including the stirring 'Hum Dekhenge' from The Kashmir Files, the emotional 'Tujh Mein Samayi Saari Duniya' from Aashram, and the beautifully-crafted 'Aandhi' from Article 370. His vocal range further shines in 'Ilahi' from Ulajh, and 'Duma Dum Mast Kalandar' from Code Name Tiranga, establishing him as a singer capable of both cinematic intensity and spiritual resonance.

On stage, Shahzad's magnetic presence has led him to perform across India and internationally, sharing space with industry stalwarts such as Pritam, Vishal and Shekhar, Mithoon, Shankar Mahadevan, Anand Raj



Anand, Hariharan and Shaan. Shilpi Madan caught up with him for this chat.

How did it feel lending your voice to Ranveer Singh for the mega hit Dhurandhar?

Electrifying! This is the biggest song of my career. It has proven to be such an absolute gamechanger after 13 years of struggle. The feeling was that of great pride, lending my voice to an artiste as accomplished as Ranveer Singh. It feels surreal, honestly.

How has your journey been in the world of singing?

Challenging, and at times very tough. I have done ample work earlier, but 'Ishq Jalakar Karvan' is the crowning glory of my career.

Bikaner or Mumbai...

Bikaner is my birthplace and Mumbai is my workplace. I love both equally.

What is your riyaaz routine?

Honestly, I wake up and the harmonium is in my hands!

Your favourite singer?

I love all the songs sung by Mohammad Rafi.

A song playing inside your head right now...

'Na To Caravan Ki Talash Hai' from the movie Dhurandhar. It was sung by Mohammad Rafi and Asha Bhonsle. This is an all-time favourite.

A piece of advice for aspiring singers?

Do riyaaz daily and keep working hard. God is with those who are sincere to their work, and showers blessings sooner or later. Keep at it.

Lifestyle, diet cuts risk of cancer

It is estimated that an alarming one in nine people in India will develop cancer in their lifetime. Around 1.50 million cases are detected annually and this figure is projected to rise. Cancer is a major health challenge today. Prof **Dr Somashekhar S P**, Chairman, Medical Advisory Board, Aster DM Healthcare, and Global Director, Aster International Institute of Oncology – Gulf Cooperation Council and India, and Lead Consultant - Surgical and Gynecological Oncology and Robotic Surgeon - HIPEC & PIPAC, sets the priorities in the battle against cancer



Invariably, World Cancer Day is used as an occasion to highlight the latest advances in technology and new treatment protocols. Efficiency of robotics, use of new-age drugs and treatment lines such as immunotherapy are fine to treat individual cases. But do they make a difference to society? Even with all advanced treatments, we can never say 'you are cured'. There is always a three per cent chance of cancer relapsing.

Therefore, the need of the hour is preventive care. This is a day to induce change in lifestyle and to highlight the importance of regular screening.

Here are some crucial factors we need to adopt in the battle against cancer:

Lifestyle: Your first line of defense

This is the easiest of all measures you can adopt to prevent cancer. Also, it costs nothing. Most of the cancers seen in India today are due to consumption of tobacco. It may be in the form of chewing tobacco or smoking. Tobacco is the most common cause of oral, lung, and head and neck cancers. Oral cancer is extremely aggressive, spreads quickly and has a very low survival rate. Tobacco causes other cancers too.

The moot point here is if you quit smoking, apart from these cancers, you also strike cancer of the urinary bladder off the list.

Blood sugar: Keep it in check

Unfortunately, India has become the diabetes capital of the world. With a population of 1.40 billion, we have the

highest number of diabetics in the world. While 70 per cent of our population is young, it is alarming to note that a sedentary lifestyle is a common bane among them. It is common to see overweight people.

The main reason for obesity becoming common is poor dietary habits – fast food, deep-fried snacks and excessive consumption of soft foods. People spend most of their time sitting at the desk with no time for exercise. This total lack of exercise combined with a sedentary lifestyle and unhealthy diet is leading to obesity and risk of diabetes and cancer.

It is critical that people become aware of their body mass index. A simple formula, prescribed by the World Health Organization, available on the Net, will give you your ideal body weight. Stay within that range. Colon, breast, uterus, kidney, pancreas and liver cancers are linked directly to body mass index.

Diet: Eat right

Body weight apart, you need to monitor what you eat carefully. Your diet needs to be low in fat and high in protein. Include a fruit and salad in meals daily.

An ideal and well-balanced diet includes fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes and nuts. Go for foods that have antioxidant properties and dense in both nutrition and fibre. It is always advisable to avoid excessive consumption of red meat, sugar and foods high in fat that can cause cancer.

It was observed in a prostate, lung, colorectal and ovarian cancer screening trial conducted by the National Cancer Institute that one serving of fruits, one serving of vegetable salad and 30 minutes of exercise every day, along with six hours of daily sleep and body weight in limit, reduces the risk of prostate, colon and breast cancers significantly.

Exercise: Get some outdoors

Pick up the habit of daily exercise. Ensure 30 minutes of physical activity daily. A brisk walk, going for a jog in a park, cycling or a daily gym session are a must. Exercise helps beat obesity and therefore cuts the risk of many cancers.

Yoga and pranayama practiced daily are known to reduce the risk significantly. These are considered excellent preventive measures.

Alcohol: None for the road

Excessive consumption of alcohol is linked to colon, breast, esophagus and oral cancers. Alcohol adds to the harmful effects of smoking. While we don't advise abstinence, we certainly advocate moderation. When you indulge in smoking, alcohol and lead a sedentary lifestyle, you correspondingly increase the risk of many forms of cancer.

As it's said, 'first you consume alcohol and then alcohol consumes you'.

Hygiene: Cleanliness is next to godliness

You need to practice hygiene in daily life. If you use a common toilet you need to ensure thorough washing to avoid infections. Genital and oral hygiene are critical. There is always the risk of contracting the human papillomavirus (HPV), and Hepatitis B and C.

These infections have contributed significantly to the numbers of cervical, anal, oral, oropharynx and liver cancers in India.

Those at risk should be vaccinated against Hepatitis B and HPV. These vaccines hardly cost much and are life-savers. A large number of people getting vaccinated will bring down the numbers significantly.

Mindfulness: Simple daily measures

You need to be mindful of your daily activity. For example, UV



Dr Somashekhar S P

rays of the sun are harmful, especially between 11 am and 3 pm. Avoid over-exposure during these hours with the use of sunscreen.

While a single screen isn't high in risk by itself, the combination of many risk factors increases risk. Use screens with discretion.

Go for a screening regularly, especially if you are at risk. The government has initiated a screening programme for breast, oral, colorectal and cervical cancers. There are many cancer screening packages you can choose from too. Set a specific date and go for a screening with your family. Very simple tests – stool, pap smear and physical examination – can prevent these four cancers that cause 50 per cent of cancer-related deaths in India.

Never neglect environmental and occupational exposures. You may be ingesting harmful chemicals unknowingly. Material such as asbestos, radiation, food preservatives, pollution from construction sites are all carcinogenic. These are simple measures you can take. There is a limit to what the government, policymakers and doctors can do. Prevention is a shared responsibility. Your proactive role makes a huge difference. Always remember, while there can be remission if detected and treated early, one can never say 'permanently cured'. Prevention is certainly better than cure.

UNITED BY UNIQUE Lifeline of hope on World Cancer Day

The key to prevention and effective treatment outcome is in awareness, regular screening and early detection, say **Dr Mangesh P Kamath**, Senior Consultant - Medical Oncology, Haematology and Bone Marrow Transplantation, and **Dr Hemalatha V**, Associate Consultant - Medical Oncology, Sagar Hospitals, Banashankari

Cancer is a profound global challenge. With over 20 million new diagnoses each year - a number steadily climbing - the disease touches nearly every family, every community. But within this sobering reality lies an empowering truth - when detected early, many cancers are highly treatable and survival rates can double, even triple. Awareness, therefore, is an active, life-saving tool.

Risk comprises many factors - some within control, some not.

Unchangeable risk

Age: The single most significant risk factor for most cancers. As cells age and accumulate genetic changes over a lifetime, the probability of errors that can lead to cancer increases. **Genetics:** A family history of certain cancers can signal inherited genetic mutations, such as BRCA1/2 for breast and ovarian cancer. Genetic counselling and testing provide a roadmap for vigilant monitoring and proactive measures.

Lifestyle and environment
Tobacco: Still the leading cause of preventable cancer worldwide, responsible for a staggering array of cancers far beyond the lungs.

Diet and weight: Obesity is a burgeoning risk factor, linked to at least 13 different cancers. Chronic inflammation and altered hormone levels associated with excess body fat create an environment conducive to cancer development. A diet consistently low in fruits, vegetables, and fibre, and high in processed meats, compounds this risk.

Alcohol: Regular and heavy consumption is a known carcinogen, damaging cells and impairing the body's ability to process and absorb vital nutrients.

Infections: Viruses like HPV (cervical, oropharyngeal cancers) and Hepatitis B & C (liver cancer) are responsible for a significant portion of cancers globally. Vaccination and treatment are powerful preventive tools.

Environment: Prolonged exposure to certain substances like asbestos, radon or industrial chemicals, and to ultraviolet radiation from the sun, adds to cumulative risk.

Risk is not destiny. It is a profile. And understanding that profile allows you to focus your efforts where they matter most - on prevention and early detection.

What you need to do

Know your profile: Have an honest conversation with your doctor about your personal and family history.

Get screened: Adhere to recommended screening schedules for cancers like breast, cervical, colorectal and



Dr Mangesh P Kamath



Dr Hemalatha V

lung (for high-risk individuals). These tests are designed to find cancer before symptoms arise, when treatment is most effective.

Listen to your body: Know the warning signs - a persistent lump, unexplained weight loss, cough that persists longer, unusual bleeding or lasting fatigue - and seek medical attention without delay.

Embrace protective habits: Avoid tobacco entirely. Limit alcohol. Move your body regularly. Nourish it with whole, plant-forward foods. Get vaccinated against HPV and Hepatitis B.

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Smart
Sips

Herbal infused
water

Boil fresh tulasi leaves and a slice of ginger in water, then cool and sip. This soothing herbal infusion hydrates while offering anti-microbial, anti-inflammatory benefits. Add a pinch of salt if desired. Ideal for post-fever recovery or just daily sipping to strengthen the immune system gently.



SATTU

Popular in north India, this protein-packed drink is made from roasted gram flour mixed with water, salt and lemon. It restores lost nutrients and keeps you full. It is now gaining popularity among fitness enthusiasts for its natural energy-boosting qualities.



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WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

HANDY COFFEE HINTS

- A tiny pinch of salt will reduce the strong bitter flavour of the coffee powder, especially if it's due to over-roasting
- If you want to spice up your coffee with cardamom, cinnamon or nutmeg, brew it with the coffee. This way they blend better than when you sprinkle them on top
- An orange or lemon peel adds aroma to your coffee. It gives it a very cafe-like taste without artificial sweetening



COFFEE WITH A TWIST

- For a smooth touch to your coffee, add a bit of white butter or ghee. It smoothenes the harsh edge of strong coffee
- When you heat milk first and then pour the decoction into it, the texture is different. Do this for a softer flavour
- Drink your coffee mindfully for a more satisfying experience



Storm in the coffee cup

Coffee is making its way into desserts and dishes you never expected it to be in. **Swatee Jog** has three delicacies with coffee you can try at home

Bengaluru-based organic farmer Ashwini Kulkarni hosted an unusual lunch for her friends last week. The guests were in for a surprise as coffee was one of the ingredients in her dishes. Not just any coffee, but a specific one derived from beans sourced from her farm near Mysuru. "I love coffee in any form - I always have my decoction ready for use. But I wanted to experiment with this flavour in other dishes and I am surprised how well it lends its aroma" she says.

Coffee, which lived comfortably in India inside cups and steel tumblers - steaming filter coffee, frothy cappuccinos in cafes, or quick instant brews on busy mornings, is now literally spilling its beans over to the dishes.

Across homes, bakeries and experimental kitchens, coffee is being paired with jaggery, cardamom, nuts, millets, milk and even savoury batters to create some unique dishes. From coffee-infused paddu to silky payasams and modern puddings, coffee is proving to be far more versatile than we once imagined.

The magic of coffee lies in its bitterness, which balances sweetness, deepens flavours and adds complexity - much like cocoa or spices such as nutmeg. Used thoughtfully, coffee doesn't dominate a dish - it elevates it.

Powder or decoction?
The way you use coffee can make or break a recipe. The choice is always between coffee powder (instant or filter) and coffee decoction (brewed coffee).

- Powder is best-suited for:
 - Baking cakes, cookies
 - Batters for pancakes and muffins
 - Dry mixes for savoury dishes
 - Subtle flavour infusion in sweet dishes
- Remember, you should always dissolve coffee powder in a little warm liquid before adding it to batters or desserts to avoid bitterness or formation of lumps. Also, use sparingly - coffee should whisper, not shout.
- Coffee decoction (brewed coffee) is best-suited for:**
 - Puddings with fruits and nuts
 - Payasams and paddus
 - Custards
 - Sauces and syrups
- Use a strong but smooth decoction. Replace part of milk or water in the recipe with decoction. Pair with jaggery, palm sugar, caramel, vanilla or cardamom for balance.



Coffee-Jaggery Paddu with Coconut Cream

Paddu is a comfort food. The bitterness of coffee offsets the jaggery's sweetness, while coconut adds softness.

- Preparation:**
Take fermented paddu batter (rice and urad dal). Put one teaspoon of coffee decoction in water and mix into the batter. Add powdered jaggery, a pinch of cardamom and finely-chopped or grated coconut. Cook in a paddu pan with ghee.
- You can serve with lightly sweetened thick coconut cream or vanilla-infused thick coconut milk.



Filter Coffee Payasa with Almond Crunch

This is a comfort dessert which can elevate any lunch with minimal effort.

- Preparation:**
Prepare a traditional milk-based payasa using vermicelli (semiya) or rice. Sweeten with jaggery or palm sugar. Add 3-4 tablespoons of strong filter coffee decoction once the milk thickens and just before serving. Finish with crushed almonds, cashews and a pinch of nutmeg.
- Serve hot or cold, tastes equally good.



Coffee-Caramel Millet Pudding (no bake)

This is a modern dessert with Indian grains and cafe flavours. It is a healthy breakfast option on its own or mixed with seasonal fruit and nuts.

- Preparation:**
Cook some roasted millet or ragi in milk until soft. Blend into a smooth pudding. Add caramel syrup, vanilla and two tablespoons of coffee decoction.
- Chill and serve topped with cut fruit, roasted hazelnuts or peanuts.
- Optional twist: Sprinkle cocoa nibs or dust some jaggery powder before serving.



Cooking with coffee

Coffee is no longer just a beverage. It's an ingredient with character. Whether folded into traditional Indian desserts or reimaged in modern puddings and snacks, coffee brings depth, warmth and surprise to food.

- Here are some tips:**
- Pair coffee with any kind of fat (milk, coconut, butter, nuts) for that richer texture and taste.
 - Balance coffee's bitter taste with a natural sweet flavour (jaggery, dates, caramel).
 - Add coffee towards the end of the cooking for aroma. Adding it earlier can dilute the taste.
 - Treat coffee as a spice, not just a flavour. Balance and minimalism hold the key.



Beetle Bailey



JUMBLE

Unscramble these Jumbles, one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.

COFER

ELFTE

KNWAE

HELSIG

Answers

FORCE FLEET WEAKEN SLEIGH

THAT SCRAMBLED WORD GAME

By David L. Hoyt and Jeff Knurek



HITORI-132

2	7	4	8	4	5	7	6
1	1	8	4	5	4	2	7
4	5	4	1	8	6	3	2
1	8	2	3	5	7	8	1
4	3	7	1	1	4	6	4
8	2	5	7	6	2	4	1
3	2	1	6	4	4	7	8
7	2	6	4	3	8	4	6

SOLUTION for HITORI-132 To solve the puzzle: Eliminate numbers by filling in squares so that remaining cells in that row or column do not repeat that number more than once. Filled-in cells cannot be horizontally or vertically adjacent. The un-filled cells must form a single component connected horizontally and vertically.

LEISURE

CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 133

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
10							
13							
17							
20							
24							
27							
30							

- EASY ACROSS**
- 1 Inexpensive (5)
 - 6 Ledge (5)
 - 9 Pair of scales (7)
 - 10 Brag (5)
 - 11 Lift (5)
 - 12 Directly below (5)
 - 13 Tolerant (7)
 - 15 Fizzy drink (3)
 - 17 Verbal (4)
 - 18 Secret plot (6)
 - 19 Jinx (5)
 - 20 Famous river (6)
 - 22 Visage (4)
 - 24 Stripling (3)
- DOWN**
- 2 Rugby forward (6)
 - 3 Descend by rope (6)
 - 4 Hit lightly (3)
 - 5 Tease (5)
 - 6 High-pitched cry (7)
 - 7 Perceive sound (4)
 - 8 Lithe (6)
 - 12 Alliance (5)
 - 13 Provincial (5)
 - 14 Water nymph (5)
 - 15 Of the foot (5)
 - 16 Boy's name (5)
 - 18 Hairdresser's shop (5)
 - 19 Newspaper (7)
 - 21 Done by hand (6)
 - 22 Uproar (6)
 - 23 Call off (6)
 - 25 Ski slope (5)
 - 26 Pith helmet (4)
 - 28 For every (3)

- CRYPTIC ACROSS**
- 1 It's worth getting excited when you have a fling (5)
 - 6 Avoids large containers (5)
 - 9 Information about whats at the bottom of things (3-4)
 - 10 You can get water at the Boar's Head, one thinks (5)
 - 11 I cleverly coin a term for classical architecture (5)
 - 12 New leader shut out by accident (5)
 - 13 New Orleans? (7)
 - 15 It's served in the late afternoon (3)
 - 17 Extra cross (4)
 - 18 Vegetable vessels (6)
 - 19 Hit on the head for a piece of silver (5)
 - 20 On a car, bad rust that's possibly growing (6)
 - 22 Walk at speed (4)
 - 24 She anticipates (3)
- DOWN**
- 2 Are such remedies for boys? (6)
 - 3 A duck lives on fruit (6)
 - 4 Succeeded in copying one (3)
 - 5 Woman getting the house in a state (5)
 - 6 The Dons are upset about a win for this team (7)
 - 7 A hitch, perhaps, in banknote production (4)
 - 8 Paid out again in duplicate (6)
 - 12 Drink with some sign of contempt? (5)
 - 13 Spare room? Not exactly (5)
 - 14 With endless luck, again gets the money (5)
 - 15 Industrial experiment? (5)
 - 16 In a monastery garden? (5)
 - 18 Where, in Wales, to start going broke! (5)
 - 19 Customer looking angry with the insurance? (7)
 - 21 Where to hold a meeting in the street (6)
 - 22 Penalise for a shipwreck around mid-June (6)
 - 23 Run around in a trance (6)
 - 25 Sign meaning "arise anew"? (5)
 - 26 German sherry centre (4)
 - 28 A favourite of the type to come first (3)

SOLUTIONS TO CROSSWORD CHALLENGE 133

ACROSS: 1. Cheap 6. Shelf 9. Balance 10. Boast 11. Thrown 6. Ships 9. Low-down 10. B-rain 18. Bourds 19. Crown 20. Carrom 22. Page 24. Eve 25. Anquilar 26. Mean 27. Inter 28. P-te 29. R-ever-se 30. Be-ar-d 31. Thil-Pd DOWN: 2. Her-A-l 3. O-ives 4. Won 5. Ida-Ho 6. S-reach 7. Hear 8. Jooker 9. Abseil 10. Pat 5. Taunt 11. Panther 30. Flail 31. Reels 22. Pad 25. Popdier 26. Trail 27. Z 27. Put on 28. Poach 19. Journal 21. Manual 22. Furore 23. Cancel 25. Pistie 26. Topi 28. Per. 26. A-beater's courage? (5) 27. Bury, a familiar football team (5) 28. Goodness, what a shame about the echo! (5) 29. Thinks highly of one who's always in the reserves? (7) 30. Can it help keep one's chest a bit warm in bed? (5) 31. By no means the first to be badly hit on the road (5) 25. Perhaps acutely scraggy? (7) 26. A beater's courage? (5) 27. Bury, a familiar football team (5) 28. Goodness, what a shame about the echo! (5) 29. Thinks highly of one who's always in the reserves? (7) 30. Can it help keep one's chest a bit warm in bed? (5) 31. By no means the first to be badly hit on the road (5) 2 Are such remedies for boys? (6) 3 A duck lives on fruit (6) 4 Succeeded in copying one (3) 5 Woman getting the house in a state (5) 6 The Dons are upset about a win for this team (7) 7 A hitch, perhaps, in

A Landmark That Grows With You.



Of Time, Place & Togetherness. 22 Years of Nexus Koramangala

Cities are remembered not only by their skylines, but by their shared spaces. The places where lives intersect briefly, repeatedly, meaningfully. In Koramangala, for 22 years, Nexus Koramangala has been one such place.

When it first opened its doors, organised retail in India was still an unfamiliar idea. Yet what emerged here was more than a shopping destination. It was a new kind of public square where neighbours met without appointments, where weekends unfolded at an easy pace, and where everyday moments quietly became memories.

Over time, the city changed. Koramangala evolved. Generations passed through its streets, students, young professionals, families finding their footing. Through it all, Nexus Koramangala remained constant by learning how to change. Not loudly, but thoughtfully.

This February, as Nexus Koramangala marks 22 years, the celebration is not about looking back alone. It is about acknowledging a shared journey of a place and its community growing together.



22 Days to Pause & Participate

Beginning 1st February, the anniversary unfolds not as a single day, but as 22 days of gentle, everyday celebration. Each day offers a reason to return, not out of urgency, but curiosity.

For 22 consecutive days, the space will host live music, cultural performances, conversations, workshops and immersive experiences, small moments woven into the rhythm of daily life. Some days will invite you to listen, others to participate, and many simply to be present.

The surroundings themselves shift subtly through thematic anniversary décor, echoing stories of time passed and time still unfolding. It is a reminder that spaces, like people, carry memory.

A Gesture of Gratitude

As part of the celebrations, Nexus Koramangala extends a quiet thank-you to the community that has sustained it. A specially curated Shop & Win initiative rewards those who shop for ₹22,000 or more with assured gifts and a surprise token of appreciation not as an incentive, but as acknowledgement.

Retailers across the mall participate with thoughtful offers, vouchers, pop-ups and giveaways, adding warmth and generosity to the anniversary month.



Still Here. Still Evolving. Still Belonging.

What has allowed Nexus Koramangala to endure is not scale or spectacle, but belonging. It has functioned as a community centre long before the phrase became fashionable - a place where culture, commerce and community coexisted naturally.

At 22, the milestone is neither an end nor a pause. It is simply a moment to gather. To walk familiar corridors again. To return more than once. To be part of a story that continues to be written, one day at a time.

*T&C apply.

This February, Bengaluru and the community of Koramangala celebrates a place that has always belonged to its people - Nexus Koramangala.

Follow us on : [@nexuskoramangala](https://www.instagram.com/nexuskoramangala)

WEEKEND LIFESTYLE FEATURE

MILK WITH CINNAMON, HONEY

This is a good drink before going to bed. It is consumed warm. Cinnamon is rich in nutrition, regulates blood sugar levels and fights infections. Honey is anti-bacterial and a prebiotic. Together they offer many health benefits and boost immunity.



BANANA MILK

A ripe banana and a pinch of vanilla blended milk is a highly nutritious drink. Banana is rich in potassium, vitamins and fibre, while vanilla is anti-bacterial and anti-inflammatory. This combination makes for a healthy beverage that can be consumed any time of the day.



Healthy Sips

Goodness of milk

Milk is rich in nutrients. It contains the calcium, protein and vitamins you need to stay fit. Milk strengthens bones and aids in muscle growth. It is also advised for cardiovascular health. Milk is a wholesome food in itself and a great beverage after vigorous exercise.



ANYTIME AND VERSATILE

Milk can be consumed anytime from early in the morning to just before going to bed at night. It is a healthy beverage in-between meals too. It is both a warming comfort in the winter and a cooler in summer. For best effect, avoid adding sugar.



TONGUE TICKLERS

Milk is a common ingredient in many fun beverages, especially cold drinks popular in the summer months. These beverages are both cooling and nourishing. They make for a great refresher after a long, hard day in the outdoors.



Hot Chocolate

A very popular beverage, it is a great evening drink. It serves as a comforting night cap too. You can make it with milk, cocoa powder, sugar and a pinch of salt. Finish with whipped cream or marshmallows.

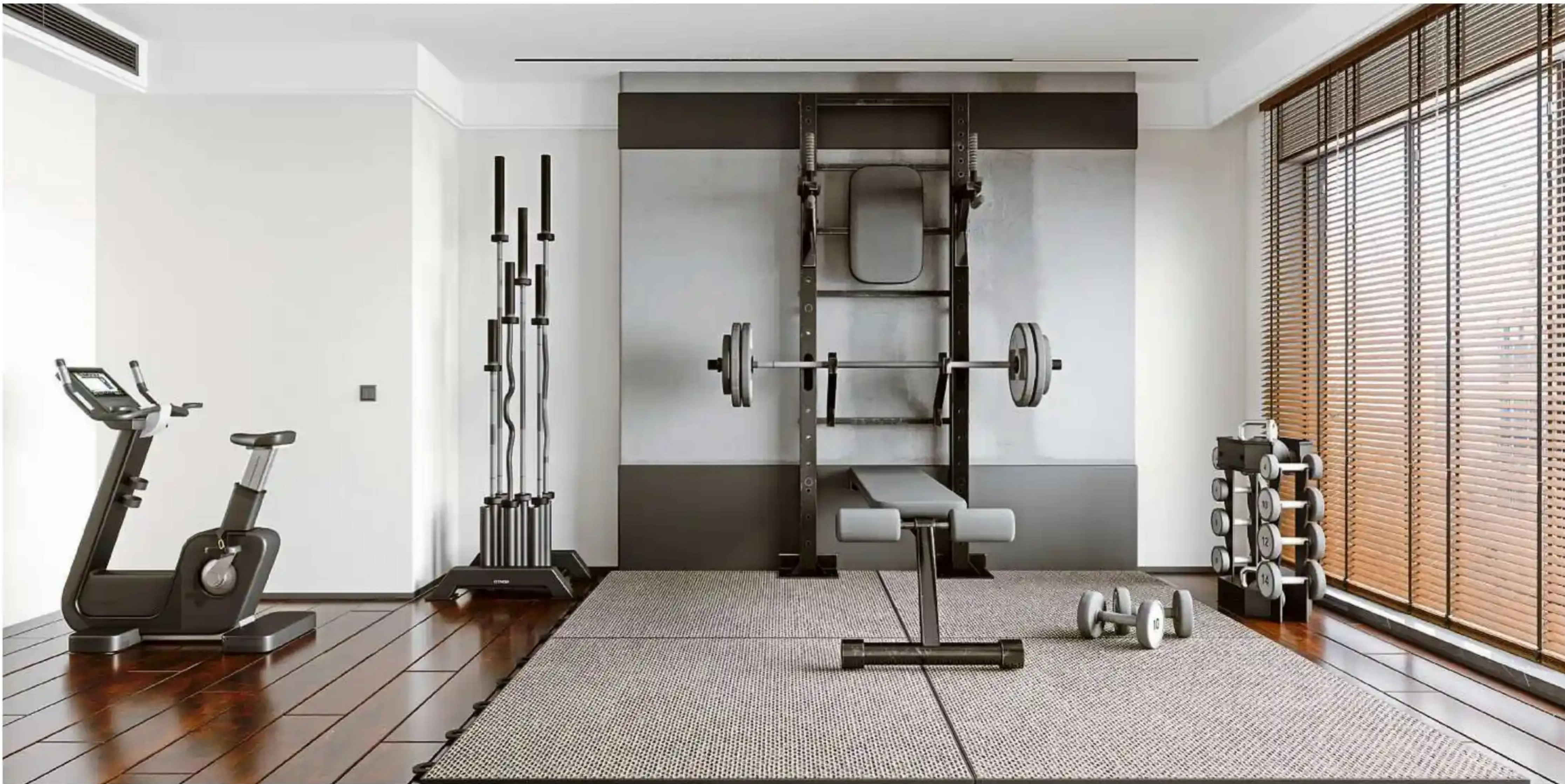


TURMERIC MILK

Usually consumed hot, this beverage is good during times of changing seasons when you are prone to colds and infections. The nutrients in milk, and the anti-inflammatory and antioxidant properties of turmeric, make it a good immunity booster. It is also good for the skin.



Bring home the gym



Don't have the time to go to the gym every day? **Jayanthi Madhukar** explains how you can create one at home

Home Front

Harini visits the gym six times a week. But she doesn't go far for it. When she and her husband, both fitness enthusiasts, purchased their first house – a three-bedroom apartment – she had already earmarked one of the rooms as their home gym. "It's mandatory for both of us to go to office so wasting time commuting to a gym was not an option", she says. "Instead, our home gym has been our fitness centre."

Harini took the advice of a fitness instructor for the equipment needed and along with the help of an interior designer, created her perfect home gym. "Since I have a sedentary job, a home

gym has transformed my lifestyle completely." Here's how you can set up your own fitness centre:

Choose the room

A home gym does not need to be expansive - it needs to be efficient. In Harini's case, it's the smallest bedroom. "It's actually a two-and-a-half-bedroom apartment," she says. The 'half bedroom' was repurposed.

Rather than de-emphasizing the cramped proportions, interior designer, Malini Gulati, suggested leaning into them. "Sometimes, it pays to paint the walls in darker colours to create a sense of drama," she says.

Get the right equipment

There are two approaches to outfitting a home gym - select a room based on the equipment you want or choose equipment that fits the room you have. With everything from free weights to treadmills and elliptical trainers on offer,

knowing what you will realistically use is essential.

Smart stationary trainers, weight racks and rowing machine can all be accommodated if planned for at the design stage.

Plan the space

This is crucial in making the home gym functional and attractive. "A home gym requires a good spatial layout," Gulati says. "It is important to leave space at the centre of the room to make your gym feel less cramped while also providing space for floor exercises, yoga or for stretching."

Prepare floor and walls

Like a commercial gym, a home set-up needs durable, easy-to-clean surfaces. "Some form of resilient flooring is necessary," Harini said. She opted for interlocking rubber tiles, though vinyl flooring can also work. Protective wainscoting helps prevent damage to walls.

Large, wall-to-wall mirror on at

least one side of the room can visually expand the space and allows you to monitor your work-out.

Lighting and power

Most fitness equipment needs power sockets. So, ensure there are power sockets placed conveniently in the room. Lighting has to be bright and cool, and if possible, ensure the room gets natural light. "I selected a chandelier for the gym because the ceiling was high enough and I love the idea of working-out in an elegantly-lit space," Harini says.

Pack it right

Smart storage keeps a gym usable and comfortable. Baskets, open shelves and racks ensure foam rollers, resistance bands, boxing gloves and mats have designated places. A simple bench can double as seating and work-out equipment.

If you like music when exercising, a music system can be incorporated in the space.

Go from groggy to great...

Still groggy when you wake up in the morning? **Shilpi Madan** explains how you can spring out of bed, feeling fresh

Struggling with springing out of bed in the mornings? Even after ensuring your vitamin levels are in good zone? Winter is on its way out and if you are still finding it tough to get out of your cosy blanket, here are a few tips to make your circadian rhythm go right.

Set small goals

Every small win is a big victory. If you are unable to awaken at the desired time, push yourself a bit. Set the alarm for 20 minutes earlier. That's right. Ease yourself into rolling out of bed when the ultimate holler sounds 20 minutes later. Set multiple alarms 10 minutes apart.

Skip the power nap

Avoid snoozing in the afternoons. Edit the quick power nap from your routine. Especially post 3 pm, as it will interfere with your sleep cycle. Fight the tendency to doze off on your recliner in the sun, even if you love it during the ebbing winter.

Secure some sunshine

Take to a brisk walk in the outdoors, soak up the nodding greenery in the park, and get some sunshine. You can even have your breakfast in the balcony or wrap up your quick coffee in the sun before you slip into the car to head to office.

Skip the caffeine

Avoid the tea and coffee after 4 pm to prevent your sleep cycle from being jostled around. After dinner, catch-ups with friends needn't merit a cup of java that will make you stay awake till late. Even sipping on green tea post sunset can add to sleep deprivation.

Save the exercise

Schedule the movement in the gymnasium or playing a sport to the first half of the day. Exhausting yourself in the evening or in the later hours towards the sleep hour will lead to a mess up in your shut-eye time.

Try slipping into bed a little earlier to clock in the necessary hours of sleep that leave you feeling fresh.



Some tips...

- Switch to dim lights in the house in the evening and brush your teeth early. This sends a psychological message to your body to wind down.
- Maintain sleep hygiene. Switch off access to gadgets and try to adhere to a

consistent time to turn into bed. This makes way for sound sleep.

- Take to a sleep pillow, a warm water bottle, wearing cotton socks or a weighted blanket to make yourself feel cosy and snug in bed.
- Nod off on time and wake up without alarms - this should be your goal.

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Avoid harsh scrubs this season

● SHILPI MADAN

With the air quality index (AQI) shooting through the roof, smart face-cleansing routines is important to keep those blackheads, whiteheads and clogged pores at bay. Here are some ways in which you can ensure a squeaky clean glowathon!

Skip hands

Avoid the tendency to run your fingers through your hair and skip touching your face with your fingers. Clean hands must be a norm, but even as you work on laptops and phones, the germs tend to accumulate and transfer onto your face, prompting annoying little breakouts and spots.

Micellar magic

Baby oil works wonders in drawing away the grime from your face. You can make use of organic argan oil too to wipe off the make-up and dust. Make use of soft cotton facial pads dipped in micellar water with oil for deep cleansing every night.

Follow up with toner

As witch hazel draws out the moisture from your skin, avoid formulations with this ingredient during this season when the skin tends to be dehydrated. You can even skip the toner if you follow up with a gentle cleansing face wash.

Scrub it easy

A harsh scrub is totally avoidable. If you must, bring in a gentle scrub along the T-zone and around your mouth to ensure clean skin, in particular. A weekly application works well. Avoid using make-up products that stay strong on your skin as you will have to rub the skin consistently to work them off.

Seal up

Dab (never rub your face) with a soft, dry towel to make it dry. Maintain a separate face towel, only for yourself. Never use a moist or wet towel on the face. Seal up with a Vitamin C serum. Apply a coin-sized quantity to reach all parts of your face.

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CHANGE OF NAME

I, Sameer Pratap Kumar Parikh, have changed to New name SAMEER PRATAP PARIKH, residing at 6001, The Five Summits Address, Road No-10, EPIP Area, Whitefield, Bengaluru- 560066, vide affidavit dated 06/02/2026 before Veena J., notary Bengaluru.....

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PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/291225/008366 HOSUR ROAD 10 MINS. ELECTRONIC CITY ₹ 60.30 - 98.70 Lakhs* 8880 003 003	PRM/KA/RERA/1250/304/PR/251024/007179 WHITEFIELD 10 MINS. HOPE FARM METRO STN. ₹ 77.91 L - 1.32 Cr* 8880 461 461	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/472/PR/250225/007524 AIRPORT ROAD NEAR PRESTIGE TECH IT PARK ₹ 87.89 L - 1.21 Cr* 8880 465 465	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/150223/005721 MYSORE ROAD NEAR CHALLAGHATTA METRO STN. ₹ 67.28 - 95.28 Lakhs* 8880 461 461	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/281125/008287 JIGANI 5 MINS. APC CIRCLE ₹ 58.45 - 92.06 Lakhs* 8880 003 003	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/151223/006489 BANASHANKARI OPP. NPS SCHOOL (3 & 4-BHK) ₹ 1.45 - 2.17 Cr* 8880 461 461
PRM/KA/RERA/1250/301/PR/251024/007178 YELAHANKA 5 MINS. RAJANUKUNTE ₹ 54.85 - 97.21 Lakhs* 8880 465 465	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006973 BANNERGHATTA RD. NEAR KOPPA GATE ₹ 62.42 - 82.18 Lakhs* 8880 013 310	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/310/PR/210324/006724 BEGUR NEAR SINGASANDRA METRO STN. ₹ 87.62 L - 1.31 Cr* 8880 013 310	PRM/KA/RERA/1251/308/PR/160824/006972 HOSA ROAD METRO NEAR ELECTRONIC CITY ₹ 67.92 L - 1.34 Cr* 8880 013 310	PRM/KA/RERA/1250/304/PR/150224/006622 WHITEFIELD SOUKYA ROAD ₹ 70.65 L - 1.06 Cr* 8880 461 461	Visit our website or talk to our advisors for the complete portfolio



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CREDAI BENGALURU

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MARS PLANET

HOSAKEREHALLI

opp. to TATA PROMONT on Hills of Banashankari

luxury apartment **FOR SALE****LIVE LAVISHLY IN YOUR OWN SLICE OF PARADISE!**

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(all inclusive)



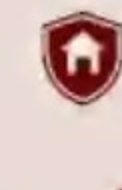
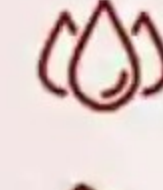
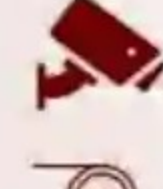
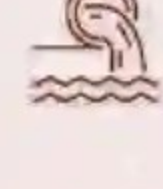
 **178**
Units

 **18**
Floors

 Built in
2.5 Acres

 **75%**
Open Space

AMENITIES

- | | |
|--|--|
|  Gymnasium |  Multi Purpose Hall |
|  Jogging Track |  Outdoor Sports |
|  Indoor Games |  Rain Water Harvesting |
|  Children Play Area |  CCTV Camera Surveillance |
|  Swimming Pool |  Sewage Treatment Plant |

**READY
for
POSSESSION**

PROXIMITY

- > Janata Bazar(Ring Road) : 1.4 kms
- > Big Bazar (Kamakya) : 2.4 kms
- > Vidyapeeta Circle : 3.1 kms
- > Basavanagudi : 4.3 kms
- > Chamarajpet : 5.1 kms
- > V.V. Puram : 6.0 kms

More information call us

87921 55802 | 97438 99993 | 9538 040404